

SNIE 14.3-1-67

24 Jul 67 ONE Memo re SNIE 14.3-1-67, Viet Cong Recruitment and Morale Problems

27 Jul 67 ONE memo re SNIE 14.3-1-67 (Draft for Board Consideration)

25X1 7 Nov 67 [ ] to Acting DDI re Air Force Reservations to NIE 14.3-67 (TOP SECRET)

25X1 7 Nov 67 [ ] memo to Ch/IRA re Comments on ACSI, USAF Footnotes to NIE 14.3-67

No Date Requirements for Initial Readout of Black Shield Photography

25X1 8 Nov 67 [ ] memo to Ch/IRA re Methodology on Weapons Re-equipping and Replacement Factor used in NIE 14.3-67

No Date Blind Memo re Briefing on "Crossover"

25X1 9 Nov 67 [ ] memo to Ch/IRA re VC/NVA Resupply Requirement for Weapons Captured by Friendly Forces

25X1 13 Nov 67 [ ] Memo for Record re MACV Press Briefing of 11 November 1967

25X1 14 Nov 67 [ ] memo to Cg/IRA re The Crossover - VC/NVA Manpower Balance (pieces on VC/NVA Manpower Balance and The Trend of VC/NVA Order of Battle Estimates for Main and Local Forces attached)

28 Nov 75 Carver memo to DCI re 1967 Order of Battle Cables

Reports

27 Jul 67 SNIE 14.3-1-67: Viet Cong Recruitment and Morale Problems (first draft)

28 Aug 67 NIE 14.3-67: Capabilities of the Vietnamese Communists for Fighting in South Vietnam (draft) (TS)

6 Oct 67 NIE 14.3-67 (forwarding changes for 28 Aug 67 draft) (TS)

16 Oct 67 NIE 14.3-67 (draft estimate forwarded for cleanup) (TS)

13 Nov 67 SNIE 14.3-67 (published report) (TS)

17 Jul 69 NIE 14.3-69 (published report)

Feb 68 ER IM 68-23, Communist Units Participating in Attacks During the Tet Offensive, 30 January Through 13 February 1968, February 1968 (Xeroxed copy 45)

SECRET

13 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT: MACV Press Briefing of 11 November 1967

1. During this 3 hour and 20 minute briefing it was stated that enemy KIA was 40,000 during the six months period May-October 1967. This is 6,666 per month and 1,538 per week. These are good numbers.

2. It was also stated that enemy OB -- unidentified as to inclusion -- was reduced from 285,000 to 242,000. Inference -- a net loss of 43,000 or 15 percent of the force.

3. With some difficulty we believe we have ascertained which numbers these are. Note first, that the old style OB was still being carried in the SEA Statistical Summary as of 4 Nov 67. This source shows 291,600 for 31 Sept 67 and 294,000 for 31 May 67. Also note the relationship between the net loss -- 43,000 -- of the 11 Nov 67 Saigon briefing and that which is shown in MACV proposed briefing -- [redacted] and the unattributed piece on bond paper which is consistent with the two telegrams. The net loss for the six months from the proposed briefing data is 30,600. If the high side of the 2,000-5,000 "estimated other losses" is used than total degradation for six months is 48,600. (See attached table.)

4. [redacted] Saigon agrees that it "would not be useful at this time to surface the manpower balance," but goes on to answer some of our nits about it.

5. We believe, as a substitute, that the numbers from the proposed briefing which we received via Deputy Assistant Secretary Henkin and George Carver, were used as the base and given an arbitrary retroactive update. These numbers were:

M & LF	118,000
AD. Svs.	35- 40,000
Guerrillas	<u>70- 90,000</u>
	223-248,000

The memorandum continuing these numbers was dated 10 Oct 67 and PVW's comments to SAVA, 11 Oct 67.

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6. 223-248,000 seems close enough to 242,000 and it is remembered that when we dealt with these MACV numbers during the summer, an attempt was made by MACV's representatives to pass out a long sheet with just such a retroactive update month by month to the nearest 1,000. Unfortunately, all present were too tired for such humor, and no one seems to have one of these gems.

7. For the six months period, latest MACV data show only a 4,000 reduction in Main and Local Force OB. Therefore, the net loss for Ad. Sys. and Guerrillas combined is 39,000 or one-third of their combined strength at the beginning of the period.



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14 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, International Research Area  
THROUGH : Chief, Indochina Division  
FROM : Acting Chief,   
SUBJECT : The Crossover - VC/NVA Manpower Balance

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1. Attached are some materials on VC/NVA manpower. Although the problem of estimating enemy OB and trends in SVN remains a prime intelligence problem, a number of useful generalizations can be made.

2. In general, we believe that the crossover point has probably been reached, but the sharpness of the break and the rate of the trend are much less pronounced than the MACV materials indicate. Recruitment has probably been at a rate closer to the one we present here than that proposed by MACV. But, because recruitment includes upgrading and NVA replacements are not used as irregulars, the latter have borne a large part of net attrition. The administrative support structure would appear to have absorbed the remainder of net attrition. Fighting units seem to be performing more of their own support and external administrative support has grown as increasing numbers of NVA troops have been used in the border areas where most of them fight.

3. As one of the attached pieces explains, we cannot be certain that the number of Main and Local Force troops has declined.

4. Although the enemy is probably suffering some net attrition now, his forces seem to have increased during most of 1966 and an increase in infiltration on the order of 2,000 per month might redress the balance even now.

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Attachment:  
As stated.

Distribution:

Orig. & 1 - Addressee  
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1 - D/I  
2 - I/SV  
OER/I/SV/RLS:lm/4121 (14 Nov 67)

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Next 6 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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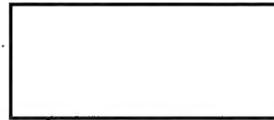
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28 November 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

SUBJECT : 1967 Order of Battle Cables

Attached is a legible set of copies of my private correspondence with Helms during the September 1967 Saigon Order of Battle conference. (These were typed directly from the xeroxed originals and are faithful reproductions of the latter's language.) I urge you to glance through them before we go in front of Pike and his committee next week.

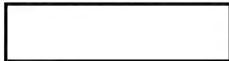


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George A. Carver, Jr.  
Deputy for National Intelligence Officers

Attachment

cc: General Wilson  
Mr. Walsh



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E-2, IMPDET  
CL BY 

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SUBJECT: 1967 Order of Battle Cables

O/D/DCI/NIO:GACarver/mee

Distribution:

- 1 - DCI
- 1 - DDCI w/o att.
- 1 - ER w/o att.
- 1 - Gen. Wilson
- 1 - Mr. Walsh
- 1 -

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FORM NO. 241  
1 FEB 55

REPLACES FORM 36-8  
WHICH MAY BE USED.

(47)

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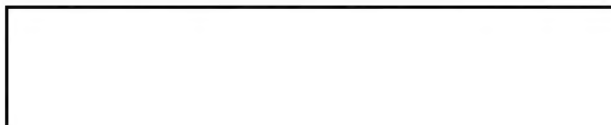
IN 49006

S E C R E T 110203Z CITE SAIGON 1826 [ ] ACTINGJ

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PRIORITY DIRECTOR

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1. SO FAR, OUR MISSION FRUSTRATINGLY UNPRODUCTIVE SINCE  
MACV STONEWALLING, OBVIOUSLY UNDER ORDERS. UNLESS OR UNTIL I CAN  
PERSUADE WESTMORELAND TO AMEND THOSE ORDERS, SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF  
EVIDENCE OR SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE.

25X1

2. SINCE ROOT PROBLEMS, AS WE ALL RECOGNIZE, LIE MUCH MORE  
IN POLITICAL PUBLIC RELATIONS REALM THAN IN SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCE,  
I HAD HOPED TO GET [ ], WESTMORELAND, KOMER AND BUNKER AGREEMENT  
ON PRESENTATIONAL PACKAGING QUESTION BEFORE ADDRESSING EVIDENCE  
AND SPECIFIC FIGURES. VARIETY OF CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER, TORPEDOED

25X1

THIS PLAN. [ ] ON 8 SEPTEMBER [ ] MORNING OBLIGATIONS 25X1  
AT SEATO AND MY 1415 PLAN MADE 1300 - 1330 ONLY POSSIBLE TIME

25X1

FOR OUR MEETING. AS [ ] COMING UP EMBASSY STAIRS, HE GRABBED BY

25X1

HANNAH WHO, WHEN INFORMED [ ] GOING TO 1300 APPOINTMENT WITH  
CAS WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE, STOOD STIFFLY ON HIS PREROGATIVES

25X1

AS DCM AND SWEPT [ ] INTO HIS OFFICE. THUS I MISSED [ ] 25X1

THOUGH I WAS ABLE TO GIVE GIST OF [ ] POSITION TO ADMIRAL 25X1

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PAGE 2 SAIGON 1826 S E C R E T

READY. WHEN TEAM ARRIVED SAIGON 8 SEPTEMBER, WE LEARNED BOTH WESTMORELAND AND KOMER HAD TAKEN OFF FOR WEEKEND OF LEAVE IN, RESPECTIVELY, MANILA AND BANGKOK. THUS WORKING SESSIONS HAD TO COMMENCE WITHOUT CONTROLLING POLICY QUESTIONS RESOLVED.

3. ON 9 SEPTEMBER, MACV J2 AND STAFF DEVOTED WHOLE DAY TO BRIEFING US ON REVISED MACV ESTIMATE, WHICH WIDENED RATHER THAN NARROWED OUR DIFFERENCES. MACV NOW STICKING ON 119,000 MAIN AND LOCAL FORCE FIGURE, 29,000 ADMIN SERVICES, 65,000 GUERRILLAS AND 85,000 POLITICAL CADRE FOR {BY NO COINCIDENCE} MILITARY AND POLITICAL OR TOTAL OF 298,000. MACV ALSO ADAMANT THAT NO FIGURE OR QUANTIFIED ESTIMATE BE GIVEN FOR OTHER ELEMENTS VC ORGANIZATION SUCH AS SELF DEFENSE, SECRET SELF DEFENSE, ASSAULT YOUTH, ETC. {14.3 DRAFT FIGURES ARE 121,000 MAIN AND LOCAL FORCE, 40-60,000 RANGE ON ADMIN SERVICE, 60-100,000 RANGE ON GUERRILLAS, 90,000 ON POLITICAL CADRE, AND 120,000 FOR OTHERS.}

4. 10 SEPTEMBER DEVOTED TO SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND METHODOLOGY ON ADMIN SERVICE AND GUERRILLAS. WE DID NOT ARGUE 2,000 DROP IN MAIN AND LOCAL FORCE {WHICH PROBABLY DEFENSIBLE} OR 5,000 DROP IN POLITICAL CADRE WHICH, AT THE MOMENT, WAS SECONDARY ISSUE. I ATTEMPTED TO CLEAR ATMOSPHERE BY OPENING SESSION WITH

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PAGE 3 SAIGON 1826 S E C R E T

STRONG PITCH FOR CAREFUL LOOK AT DATA CATEGORY BY CATEGORY, WITHOUT CONSIDERING ULTIMATE TOTAL UNTIL ANALYSIS EACH SEPARATE CATEGORY COMPLETED, AND BY OUTLINING HOW PRESENTATIONAL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ISSUE COULD BE HANDLED IN FASHION BENEFICIAL TO MACV AND US GOVERNMENT CREDIBILITY WHEREVER WE COME OUT. I ALSO EXPLAINED, IN LOW KEY AND WITH ALL POSSIBLE TACT, THAT NATIONAL ESTIMATES WERE DCI ESTIMATES; THAT OTHER USIB MEMBERS COULD DISSENT, BUT NO ONE COULD TELL THE USIB CHAIRMAN WHAT HIS ESTIMATE HAD TO BE. MY REMARKS SEEMED WELL RECEIVED BUT HAD NO INFLUENCE ON THE BEHAVIOR OF GENERAL DAVIDSON OR HIS SUBORDINATES.

5. 14.3 CASE ON ADMIN SERVICE AND GUERRILLA FIGURES MOST ABLY PRESENTED BY MESSRS. ADAMS AND HYLAND. THOUGH TO DISCOMFITURE OF OUR HOSTS THIS CASE PATENTLY STRONGER THAN MACV'S, IT WAVED ASIDE BY GENERAL DAVIDSON. TWO EXAMPLES CONVEY THE PICTURE: ESTIMATE DRAFT FIGURES INCLUDE 17,000 ADMIN SERVICE AT DISTRICT LEVEL; MACV ONLY ACCEPTS 5,000. MR. ADAMS EXPLAINED HOW OUR DISTRICT LEVEL FIGURE DEVELOPED FROM ADMIN TO COMBAT TROOP RATIO EXTRAPOLATED FROM DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE COVERING 14 DISTRICTS. GENERAL DAVIDSON TORE INTO THIS, SAYING 14 DISTRICT BASE TOO SLIM FOR EXTRAPOLATION OF VALID NATIONWIDE FIGURE. SOON THEREAFTER,

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PAGE 4 SAIGON 1826 S E C R E T

HOWEVER, OFFICER WHO PRESENTED MACV CASE ON THIS POINT HAD TO ADMIT {IN RESPONSE DAVIDSON'S OWN QUESTIONS} THAT MACV 5,000 FIGURE BASED ON ONLY THREE DISTRICTS AND, EVEN HERE, MACV HAD MADE DOWNWARD ADJUSTMENT IN WHAT DOCUMENTS ACTUALLY SAID. NO MATTER, DAVIDSON WOULD NOT BUDGE. WHEN CHALLENGING MACV'S ADAMANT REFUSAL TO QUANTIFY ESTIMATE OF IRREGULARS {SELF DEFENSE, SECRET SELF DEFENSE}, WE POINTED OUT 14.3 DRAFT FIGURES TAKEN UNCHANGED FROM JULY 1967 MACV STUDY ON IRREGULARS. AGAIN, NO MATTER, NO GIVE. EVEN DIA TEAM MOST IRRITATED. AFTER SESSION,  25X1 GRUMBLED "WE DID NOT TRAVEL 8,000 MILES TO BE INSULTED."

6. VARIETY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL INDICATORS -- MACV JUGGLING OF FIGURES ITS OWN ANALYSTS PRESENTED DURING AUGUST DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON, MACV BEHAVIOR, AND TACIT OR OBLIQUE LUNCHTIME AND CORRIDOR ADMISSIONS BY MACV OFFICERS, INCLUDING DAVIDSON -- ALL POINT TO INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION THAT GENERAL WESTMORELAND {WITH KOMER'S ENCOURAGEMENT} HAS GIVEN INSTRUCTION TANTAMOUNT TO DIRECT ORDER THAT VC STRENGTH TOTAL WILL NOT EXCEED 300,000 CEILING. RATIONALE SEEMS TO BE THAT ANY HIGHER FIGURE WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENTLY OPTIMISTIC AND WOULD GENERATE UNACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF CRITICISM FROM THE PRESS. THIS ORDER OBVIOUSLY MAKES IT

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PAGE 5 SAIGON 1826 S E C R E T

IMPOSSIBLE FOR MACV TO ENGAGE IN SERIOUS OR MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION OF EVIDENCE OR OUR REAL SUBSTANTIVE DISAGREEMENTS, WHICH I STRONGLY SUSPECT ARE NEGLIGIBLE.

7. I HOPE TO SEE KOMER AND WESTMORELAND TOMORROW {11 SEPT} AND WILL ENDEAVOR TO LOOSEN THIS STRAITJACKET. UNLESS I CAN, WE ARE WASTING OUR TIME. TO SHOW, HOWEVER, THAT WE ARE WILLING TO GO EVEN BEYOND THE LAST MILE, MESSRS. HYLAND, [ ] AND ADAMS ARE GOING TO SIT DOWN WITH MACV'S WORKING LEVEL ANALYSTS AND REVIEW THE EVIDENCE ON ADMIN SERVICE, GUERRILLAS AND POLITICAL CADRE DOCUMENT BY DOCUMENT. 25X1

8. FOR COSMETIC REASONS, GIVEN THE SITUATION AND THE FACT THAT KOMER AND WESTMORELAND WILL NOT ARRIVE UNTIL 11 SEPTEMBER, IT WOULD BE A POLITICAL ERROR FOR US TO LEAVE ON 12 SEPTEMBER AS PLANNED. THUS WE WILL HAVE TO REMAIN AN ADDITIONAL DAY OR TWO FOR APPEARANCES SAKE IF NOTHING ELSE. IF I CAN BUDGE WESTMORELAND, THIS WHOLE MATTER CAN BE RESOLVED TO EVERYONE'S SATISFACTION IN A FEW HOURS OF SERIOUS DISCUSSION. IF I CAN NOT, NO AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE.

9. [ ] HAVE BOTH SEEN THIS MESSAGE. [ ] 25X1  
LEFT AFTERNOON 10 SEPTEMBER.

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SEP 11 1553Z  
DIRECTOR 34454

S E C R E T

TO: PRIORITY SAIGON

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RE SAIG 1826 {IN-49006}, AGREE YOU SHOULD REMAIN UNTIL YOU  
HAVE HAD SESSION WITH BOTH WESTMORELAND AND KOMER. PLEASE LET  
ME KNOW OUTCOME, AND PLEASE CLEAR WITH ME YOUR DEPARTURE FROM  
SAIGON. IN OTHER WORDS, TEAM SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT LEAVE  
FOR WASHINGTON UNTIL WE GIVE APPROVAL.

{END OF MESSAGE}

/S/  
RICHARD HELMS  
RELEASING OFFICER

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12 SEP 67 IN 50294

S E C R E T 121215Z CITE SAIGON 1925 [ ] ACTING}

25X1

IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR

SECTION 1 OF 2

FOR MR. HELSM ONLY FROM MR. CARVER

[ ]  
REF: SAIGON 1926

BEGIN TEXT

"SUBJECT: JOINT CIA-DIA-INR REPRESENTATIVES' POSITION ON  
VIET CONG STRENGTH ESTIMATES"

"AFTER REVIEWING THE EVIDENCE, METHODOLOGY AND WASHINGTON  
DISCUSSIONS WHICH LED TO THE LANGUAGE OF THE 28 AUGUST DRAFT  
OF NIE 14.3-67 IN LIGHT OF OUR SAIGON DISCUSSIONS WITH THE STAFF  
OF COMUSMACV, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
AGENCY, DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY AND BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE  
AND RESEARCH OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE JOINTLY BELIEVE THE  
FOLLOWING FIGURES AND DEFINITIONS, WHICH MODIFY THOSE NOW APPEARING  
IN THE DRAFT NIE, WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY THEIR RESPECTIVE WASHINGTON  
PRINCIPALS:

VIET CONG MILITARY FORCE

MAIN AND LOCAL FORCES: 119,000 - {119,000}

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PAGE 2 SAIGON 1925 S E C R E T

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

GUERRILLAS	35,000	45,000
TOTAL	75,000	95,000
	229,000	259,000

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↑  
↑

"WE ESTIMATE THAT THE PRESENT STRENGTH OF THE VIET CONG POLITICAL CADRE STRUCTURE IS IN THE 80,000 TO 90,000 RANGE.

"THE NIE WOULD HAVE NO AGGREGATE TOTAL OF THE VIET CONG MILITARY FORCE AND THE VIET CONG POLITICAL CADRE STRUCTURE SINCE WE BELIEVE SUCH AN AGGREGATE TOTAL IS INHERENTLY MEANINGLESS AND MISLEADING.

"ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, THE FIGURE NOTED ABOVE WOULD BE PRESENTED IN AN EXPLANATORY PARAGRAPH A DRAFT COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED HERETO.

"THERE WOULD BE NO NUMERICAL ESTIMATE ON THE SIZE AND STRENGTH OF THE SELF DEFENSE, SECRET SELF-DEFENSE, AND OTHER SIMILAR VC ORGANIZATIONS. INSTEAD, THESE WOULD BE TEXTUALLY EXPLAINED AS INDICATED IN DRAFT PARAGRAPHS WHICH ALSO ARE ATTACHED TO THIS MEMORANDUM.

"IN CONNECTION WITH THESE "IRREGULAR" ORGANIZATIONS {AS INDICATED IN MY CONVERSATIONS WITH GENERAL DAVIDSON}, WE WOULD LIKE TO INITIATE A JOINT WASHINGTON - SAIGON EFFORT TO DEVELOP

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PAGE 3 SAIGON 1925 S E C R E T

A METHODOLOGY TO INSURE THAT LOSSES INCURRED BY THESE IRREGULARS DO NOT DISTORT OUR INPUT - LOSS CALCULATIONS APPLIED TO DETERMINING ATTRITION ON OR THE FUTURE STRENGTHS OF THE VC MILITARY FORCE AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE.

"WITH REGARD TO INPUT - LOSS CALCULATING, WE WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE RECEIVING A COPY OF [REDACTED] 'CROSSOVER' BRIEFING AND HAVING AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEND YOU OUR CONSIDERED COMMENTS ON THIS VERY INTERESTING PRESENTATION BEFORE ITS ARGUMENT OR CONCLUSIONS ARE SURFACED OUTSIDE OF OFFICIAL CHANNELS. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE COPIES OF THE BRIEFING WE RECEIVED ON CURRENT RECRUITMENT RATES AND [REDACTED] EXCELLENT BRIEFING ON VC MORALE.

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"WITH REGARD TO THE FORTHCOMING NIE, ANY TEXT COMUSMACV WISHES TO SUBMIT TO MODIFY PARAGRAPHS IN THE PRESENT DRAFT OR ANY COMUSMACV SUGGESTION FOR ADDITIONAL PARAGRAPHS WILL BE TAKEN BACK TO WASHINGTON FOR CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BY THE INTER-AGENCY COORDINATING PROCESS THROUGH WHICH NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES ARE PRODUCED. GEORGE A. CARVER, JR, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE"

BEGIN TEXT ATTACHMENT 1

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PAGE 4 SAIGON 1925 S E C R E T

"TO FOLLOW THE PARAGRAPH DEFINING ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE FORCES AND EXPLAINING THAT WE CANNOT ESTIMATE THE PERSONNEL IN CAMBODIA, LAOS AND ACROSS THE DMZ:"

"26. WE CANNOT BE CONFIDENT OF THE TOTAL SIZE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE FORCES AT ANY GIVEN TIME. OBVIOUSLY, THEIR STRENGTH SHOULD STAND IN SOME RATIO TO THE COMBAT FORCES THEY SUPPORT. INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT STRENGTH OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AT THE LOWER LEVELS IS INSUFFICIENT TO ESTABLISH A FIRM ESTIMATE. MOREOVER, THIS FORCE HAS ALMOST CERTAINLY SUFFERED ATTRITION AND HAS PROBABLY BEEN DRAWN DOWN TO PROVIDE SOME COMBAT REPLACEMENTS. IN LIGHT OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, WE ESTIMATE THAT THERE ARE NOW ABOUT 35,000-45,000 ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE PERSONNEL WHO ARE PERFORMING ESSENTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS, FULL TIME. IN ADDITION, HOWEVER, THERE ARE SEVERAL THOUSANDS WHO ARE ASSIGNED MARGINAL FUNCTIONS, NOT NECESSARILY FULL TIME. AND, OF COURSE, ALMOST ANYONE UNDER VC CONTROL CAN BE AND IS IMPRESSED INTO SERVICE TO PERFORM SPECIFIC ADMINISTRATIVE OR SUPPORT TASKS WHEN LOCAL CONDITIONS REQUIRE HIS SERVICES." END TEXT ATTACHMENT 1

BEGIN TEXT ATTACHMENT 2

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PAGE 5 SAIGON 1925 S E C R E T

"OTHER COMMUNIST ELEMENTS:"

"THE COMMUNISTS MAKE A DELIBERATE EFFORT TO ORGANIZE MOST OF THE PEOPLE UNDER THEIR CONTROL INTO VARIOUS WORK FORCES AND SEMI-MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHEN OCCASION DEMANDS, ALMOST EVERY ABLE-BODIED PERSON UNDER VC CONTROL MAY BE CALLED ON TO SUPPORT THE WAR EFFORT. AMONG THE MORE SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATIONS "ARE THE SELF-DEFENSE FORCES, SECRET SELF-DEFENSE FORCES AND OTHER GROUPS SUCH AS THE "ASSAULT YOUTH". THE SD IS REGULARLY REPORTED AND PORTRAYED BY THE COMMUNISTS AS A MILITARY ORGANIZATION SIMILAR TO VILLAGE AND HAMLET GUERRILLAS, BUT IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THEIR ORGANIZATION AND MISSION DIFFER. THEY INCLUDE PERSONNEL OF ALL AGES, A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES, ELDERLY PERSONS, AND CHILDREN. THEY ARE LARGELY UNARMED AND ONLY PARTIALLY TRAINED. THE DUTIES OF SELF-DEFENSE UNITS INCLUDE THE MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER, AND PROTECTION OF VILLAGES AND HAMLETS IN ENEMY-CONTROLLED TERRITORY. THE CONSTRUCTION OF FORTIFICATIONS, PROPAGANDA AND INTELLIGENCE WORK. THEIR EXISTENCE POSES AN IMPEDIMENT PARTICULARLY TO THE ALLIED PACIFICATION EFFORTS. SELF DEFENSE FORCES DO NOT LEAVE THEIR HOME AREAS, AND MEMBERS GENERALLY PERFORM THEIR DUTIES ON A PART-TIME BASIS. IN THEIR DEFENSIVE

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IN 50294

S E C R E T 121325 CITE SIAGON 1925 [ ] ACTING  
IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR  
FINAL SECTION OF 2  
FOR MR. HELMS ONLY FROM MR. CARVER

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[ ]  
ROLE, THEY INFLICT CASUALTIES ON ALLIED FORCES.

"SECRET SELF-DEFENSE FORCES ARE AN ADDITIONAL ELEMENT WHICH OPERATE IN GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED AND CONTESTED AREAS. THEY PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THE COMMUNIST EFFORT, PRIMARILY BY CLANDESTINE INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES AND AS A RESIDUE OF THE COMMUNIST PRESENCE IN SUCH AREAS.

"DURING THE PAST YEAR WE HAVE LEARNED MORE ABOUT A VC ORGANIZATION CALLED 'ASSAULT YOUTH'. THEY SERVE FULL-TIME AT DISTRICT LEVEL AND ABOVE, AND THEY ARE ORGANIZED INTO BATTALIONS, COMPANIES, AND PLATOONS. ALTHOUGH SOME ARE ARMED, THE COMMUNISTS DO NOT CONSIDER THEM AS A COMBAT FORCE; THEIR PRIMARY MISSION APPEARS TO BE A LOGISTICAL ONE, FREQUENTLY IN BATTLEFIELD AREAS. SOME OF THE CASUALTIES INFLICTED BY ALLIED FORCES IN BATTLE ARE SUSTAINED BY THE 'ASSAULT YOUTH'. THIS ORGANIZATION ALSO SERVES AS A MANPOWER POOL AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR YOUTH WHO LATER GO

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PAGE 2 SAIGON 1925 S E C R E T

INTO THE VC MAIN AND LOCAL FORCES. LITTLE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO INDICATE THE STRENGTH OF DISTRIBUTION OF THE 'ASSAULT YOUTH.'

"OUR CURRENT EVIDENCE DOES NOT ENABLE US TO ESTIMATE THE PRESENT SIZE OF THESE GROUPS WITH ANY MEASURE OF CONFIDENCE. SOME DOCUMENTS SUGGEST THAT IN EARLY 1966 THE AGGREGATE SIZE OF THE SELF DEFENSE GROUP WAS THEN ON THE ORDER OF 150,000. THESE 'IRREGULAR' COMPONENTS, HOWEVER, HAVE UNQUESTIONABLY SUFFERED ATTRITION SINCE THAT TIME, AS WELL AS AN APPRECIABLE DECLINE IN QUALITY, BECAUSE OF CASUALTIES, UPGRADING OF SOME OF THEIR MEMBERS INTO THE GUERRILLAS OR OTHER VC MILITARY COMPONENTS AND, PARTICULARLY, THE SHRINKAGE IN VC CONTROL OF POPULATED AREAS. THOUGH IN AGGREGATE NUMBERS THESE GROUPS ARE STILL LARGE, AND THEY STILL CONSTITUTE A PART OF THE OVERALL COMMUNIST EFFORT, THEY ARE NOT OFFENSIVE MILITARY FORCES AND SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE MILITARY ORDER OF BATTLE TOTAL, EVEN THOUGH SOME OF THEIR MEMBERS ARE PROBABLY INCLUDED IN OUR CASUALTY FIGURES AND THEY ACCOUNT FOR A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE CHIEU HOIS." END TEXT  
ATTACHMENT 2.

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SECRET

12 SEP 67 IN 50318

S E C R E T 121335Z CITE SAIGON 1926 [ ] ACTING}

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IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR

SECTION 1 OF 2

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REFS: A. SAIGON 1826\*(IN 49006}

B. DIRECTOR 34454\*\*

C. SAIGON 1925 (IN 50294}

[ ] depart for Washington without his clearance.)

1. SEPTEMBER 11 AND 12 FULL OF ACTION AND BEHIND SCENES SCURRYING IN MACV, BUT HAVE PRODUCED LITTLE MOVEMENT. AT PRESENT, WE ARE AT AN IMPASSE. I HAVE SEEN KOMER ONCE AND AM HAVING DINNER WITH HIM TONIGHT. I SEE WESTMORELAND (WITH KOMER, DAVIDSON, THE DIA PRINCIPALS, AND MR. TEARE OF INR TOMORROW, 13 SEPTEMBER}. THIS MAY CLEAR THE AIR, BUT IT MAY LOCK US IN WHERE WE NOW ARE. I WILL SEE THE AMBASSADOR AFTER THE WESTMORELAND SESSION.

2. ON 11 SEPTEMBER, MESSRS. HYLAND, ADAMS, AND [ ] REVIEWED THE DETAILED EVIDENCE ON, RESPECTIVELY, ADMIN SERVICES, GUERRILLA AND POLITICAL CADRE. MR. ADAMS MANAGED TO GET MACV'S GUERRILLA FIGURES APPRECIABLY RAISED, MR.

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PAGE 2 SAIGON 1926 S E C R E T

HYLAND MADE NO CHANGES IN MACV'S ADMIN SERVICE HOLDINGS, BUT SAW IN DETAIL HOW WEAK THEIR CASE WAS (E.G., A DOCUMENT USED TO PROVIDE THE MODEL FOR ONE OF THE THREE DISTRICTS ON WHICH MACV'S DISTRICT-LEVEL CASE WAS BASED HAD A PARAGRAPH MACV DID NOT CITE, PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR MR. ADAMS' EXTRAPOLATED ADMIN TO COMBAT RATIO AT DISTRICT LEVEL}. [ ] MADE NO CHANGES, BUT ON 11 SEPTEMBER OUR POSITIONS ON POLITICAL CADRE WERE VERY CLOSE.

3. ON 11 SEPTEMBER, GENERAL DAVIDSON AND I SPENT TWO HOURS WITH MR. KOMER, ACCOMPANIED BY GENERAL GODDING AND [ ] (DIA DELEGATION HEAD}. I REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF THE ESTIMATE, ITS VARIOUS DRAFTS, THE AUGUST WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS (IN WHICH MACV'S REPRESENTATIVES HAD PARTICIPATED}, THE RATIONALE FOR THE FIGURES IN THE 28 AUGUST DRAFT, AND THE RESULTS OF OUR 10 SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE WITH THE MACV STAFF. WHILE COVERING THE LAST POINT, I WAS FREQUENTLY AND SOMETIMES TENDENTIOUSLY INTERRUPTED BY DAVIDSON, PARTICULARLY WHEN I STRESSED THAT OUR SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES WERE PROBABLY NOT GREAT AND COULD SWIFTLY BE RESOLVED IF WE COULD PROCEED CATEGORY BY CATEGORY, WITHOUT

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PAGE 3 SAIGON 1926 S E C R E T

ANY WEATHER EYE ON A FINAL TOTAL. {DAVIDSON ANGRILY ACCUSED ME OF IMPUGNING HIS INTEGRITY SINCE HE HAD ASSURED ME HE HAD NO PRE-DETERMINED TOTAL.} I PRESENTED MY THOUGHTS ON THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEM, NOTING THAT A CLEARING OF THE ATMOSPHERE, NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHORT TERM STATIC PRODUCED, WOULD BENEFIT OUR CREDIBILITY POSTURE, THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO ESTABLISH A VALID BASE LINE WE WOULD NEVER HUAQUVHRIUSK<sup>\*</sup>RETROACTIVE ADJUST UPWARD, AND THAT IF MACV WENT TO THE PRESS WITH THE LINE TAUT AFTER AN EXHAUSTIVE REVIEW OF ALL ITS EVIDENCE AND METHODOLOGY, IT CAME OUT WITH A MILITARY PLUS POLITICAL TOTAL OF {BY STRANGE COINCIDENCE} 298,000, IT REALLY WOULD BE CRUCIFIED.

4. KOMER THEN LAUNCHED INTO AN HOUR-PLUS MONOLOGUE, REVIEWING HIS AND WESTMORELAND'S PROBLEMS WITH THE PRESS, THEIR FRUSTRATING INABILITY TO CONVINCE THE PRESS {HENCE THE PUBLIC} OF THE GREAT PROGRESS BEING MADE, AND THE PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE OF SAYING NOTHING THAT WOULD DETRACT FROM THE IMAGE OF PROGRESS OR SUPPORT OF THE THESIS OF STALEMATE. HE THEN OPENED A STRONG ATTACK ON THE ESTIMATE DRAFT, FAULTING THE QUALITY OF ITS PROSE AND ITS ANALYSIS AND CALLING IT A SLOPPY,

\*BEING SVCD

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PAGE 4 SAIGON 1926 S E C R E T

THIN AND ALTOGETHER DISAPPOINTING PIECE OF WORK, OUT OF DATE WHERE IT WAS NOT ACTUALLY WRONG. HE NOTED THAT OCI AND ONE HAD ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF ANALYSTS WORKING ON VIETNAM, NONE OF WHOM KNEW MUCH ABOUT IT. THE AGENCY'S ANALYSIS, CONSEQUENTLY, COULD NOT EXPECT TO COMPARE IN DEPTH AND QUALITY TO THAT OF MACV, WITH ITS BATTERIES OF SPECIALISTS. HE HAD MUCH MORE FAITH IN MACV'S FIGURES THAN OURS (THOUGH WE THOUGHT MACV'S TOO HIGH) AND WOULD HENCE RECOMMEND TO WESTMORELAND

THAT OURS BE REJECTED. HE DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT HE AGREED THAT THE 298,000 TOTAL HAD TO BE CHANGED (FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS REASONS) AND AGREED WITH ME THAT THE FINAL ESTIMATE SHOULD SHOW RANGES RATHER THAN SINGLE FIGURES. HE WAS ADAMANT, HOWEVER, IN INSISTING THAT THEIRS MUST NOT BE ANY QUANTIFICATION OF THE IRREGULAR FORCES ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE PRESS WOULD ADD ALL FIGURES, TOGETHER AND HENCE QUANTIFYING THE IRREGULARS WOULD PRODUCE A POLITICALLY UNACCEPTABLE TOTAL OVER 400,000.

5. THE ATMOSPHERE CHANGED MARKEDLY AFTER THE KOMER SESSION. DAVIDSON CHORTED HIS DELIGHT AT SCUTTLING THE 298,000 TOTAL. HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE GENERAL GODDING WORK OUT THE SPREADS. I SUGGESTED WE DEVELOP THE SPREADS TOGETHER, CATEGORY

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PAGE 5 SAIGON 1926 S E C R E T

BY CATEGORY, BUT DAVIDSON DEMURRED. SHORTLY BEFORE WE LEFT, HOWEVER, DAVIDSON'S DEPUTY SIDLED UP TO MR. HYLAND TO ASK "HOW WOULD YOU GET TO 309,000, SHOW ME AND YOU'LL HAVE A PROPOSITION.

6. WHEN WE WENT TO MACV ON 12 SEPTEMBER GENERAL DAVIDSON AND GENERAL GODDING HANDED ME A WHITE CARD WITH THE FOLLOWING TYPED THEREON: QUOTE MAIN AND LOCALS 119,000, ADM SVC 25,000 - 35,000, GUERRILLAS 75,000 - 95,000, TOTAL 219,000 - 249,000 {MEAN 234,000}, POLITICAL CADRE 70,000 - 80,000 - SELF DEFENSE AND SECRET SELF DEFENSE, NO QUANTIFICATION. OPTIMISTIC ATMOSPHERE IN NIE. UNQUOTE.

7. I SUGGESTED WE GET OUR ANALYSTS TOGETHER AND REVIEW THE SPREADS CATEGORY BY CATEGORY. DAVIDSON REFUSED, SAYING THAT WAS MACV'S FINAL OFFER, NOT SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION. WE SHOULD TAKE OR LEAVE IT.

8. I THEN CONVENED THE ENTIRE WASHINGTON DELEGATION TO SEE IF WE COULD HAMMER OUT A POSITION DIA AND INR WOULD JOIN US IN. IT TOOK SIX HOURS, BUT WE SUCCEEDED. I THEN WROTE OUR POSITION OUT AS A FORMAL MEMORANDUM {TEXT IN REF C} WHICH I PRESENTED TO GENERAL DAVIDSON AT 1800 HOURS.

S E C R E T

BT

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SECRET

12 SEPT 67 IN 50318

S E C R E T 121335 CITE SAIGON 1926  ACTING}

25X1

IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR

FINAL SECTION OF TWO

25X1



SECRET

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 6 SAIGON 1926 S E C R E T

9. YOU WILL NOTE I HAVE MADE A MAJOR CONCESSION IN NOT QUANTIFYING THE IRREGULARS. IT SEEMED TO ME THIS WAS MACV'S MAJOR STICKING POINT, THAT OUR FIGURES WERE NOT ALL THAT FIRM, AND THAT THE PROSE TEXT ADOPTED MAKES IT CLEAR THAT WE HAVE THE HUNDRED THOUSAND RANGE IN MIND EVEN THOUGH NO PRECISE FIGURE IS USED.

10. FOR THE REST, WE BUY MACV'S POSITION ON MAIN AND LOCAL FORCE AND THEIR NEW POSITION {COURTESY OF MR. ADAMS} ON GUERRILLAS. WE ARE STICKING ON THE POLITICAL CADRE FIGURE EVERYONE HAD AGREED TO {IT IS IN A 1 SEPTEMBER MACV STUDY} UNTIL TODAY, WHEN MACV WHACKED IT JUST TO GET THE TOTAL DOWN. ON ADMIN SERVICES, I AND MY COLLEAGUES BELIEVE WE HAVE GIVEN ALL THE GROUND WE CAN WITHOUT VIOLATING OUR PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY.

11. AFTER READING MY MEMORANDUM, DAVIDSON SAID THIS CLOSED THE ISSUE. MACV HAD MADE ITS FINAL OFFER AND THERE WOULD BE TWO SETS OF FIGURES. I SAID THERE HAD TO BE SOME FURTHER DISCUSSION SINCE I WAS UNDER YOUR INSTRUCTIONS TO DISCUSS THIS WHOLE SUBJECT PERSONALLY WITH GENERAL WESTMORELAND. AS NOTED ABOVE, THE WESTMORELAND SESSION IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR 0830 TOMORROW {13 SEPTEMBER}. IF HE

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PAGE 7 SAIGON 1926 S E C R E T

REFUSES TO REMOVE THE STRICTURE OF A PRE-DETERMINED TOTAL,  
FIXED ON PUBLIC RELATIONS GROUNDS, WE CAN GO NO FURTHER  
{UNLESS YOU INSTRUCT OTHERWISE}. IF HE LIFTS THIS STRICTURE,  
MACV'S ANALYSTS ARE DYING TO HAVE OUR REVISED FIGURES  
ACCEPTED.

12. I WILL REPORT TOMORROW ON THE KOMER DINNER  
AND WESTMORELAND MEETING, AND WOULD WELCOME HEADQUARTERS  
COMMENTS AND GUIDANCE BEFORE THE LATTER. WE HAVE  
RESERVATIONS FOR THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER {PUTTING US IN  
WASHINGTON 17 SEPTEMBER}, BUT WILL NOT LEAVE WITHOUT YOUR  
EXPLICIT AUTHORIZATION PER REFERENCE B.

S E C R E T

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S E C R E T

SAIGON 1926 PARA 3  
STA & NR

12 SEP 67  
DATE

SERVICE

50318 A  
IN NR

PLEASE CORRECT THE GARBLED PORTION(S) OF THIS MESSAGE TO  
READ AS FOLLOWS:

"WE WOULD NEVER HAVE TO RETROACTIVELY ADJUST UPWARD AND THAT"

SECRET

13 SEP 67 IN 51159

S E C R E T 131225Z CITE SAIGON 1983

[REDACTED] ACTING}

25X1

IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR

SECTION 1 OF 2

(\*Messages to [REDACTED] concern the VC strength estimates.)

25X1

REF: A. SAIGON 1925\* {IN 50294}

B. SAIGON 1926\* {IN 50318}

1. CIRCLE NOW SQUARED, CHIEFLY AS RESULT OF WESTMORELAND SESSION {AND PERHAPS KOMER DINNER}. WE NOW HAVE AGREED SET OF FIGURES WESTMORELAND ENDORSES. MISSION SEEMS ON VERGE OF SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION, THOUGH FINAL T'S TO BE CROSSED TOMORROW.

2. KOMER DINNER WAS RELAXED, FRANK, CORDIAL AND {MOST USEFULLY} PRIVATE. WE REVIEWED WHOLE ESTIMATE EXERCISE. I GAVE BLUNT OUTLINE OF WEAKNESSES IN MACV CASE, OF PECULIAR MACV BEHAVIOR, AND OF FACT THAT AGREEMENT IMPOSSIBLE UNLESS CLIMATE IMPROVED ENOUGH TO PERMIT SERIOUS DISCUSSION. KOMER DID NOT AGREE WITH OUR SUBSTANTIVE POSITION AND REPEATED SOME CAUSTIC REMARKS ABOUT THE ESTIMATE BUT HE DID LISTEN.

3. ON MORNING 13 SEPTEMBER, GENERAL DAVIDSON ADVISED ME WESTMORELAND MEETING WOULD DO NOTHING BUT FORMALIZE OUR IMPASSE.

SECRET



~~SECRET~~

PAGE 2 SAIGON 1988 S E C R E T

SINCE WESTMORELAND WOULD NEVER ACCEPT OUR POSITION. WHEN MEETING CONVENED {WITH ABRAMS, KOMER, GENERAL SIDLE {PIO} AND INR REPS ATTENDING}. DAVIDSON GAVE RATHER BIASED ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS, NOTING OUR IMPASSE ON FIGURES, SAYING HE THOUGHT OUR PARAGRAPH WRITTEN TO AVOID QUANTIFYING IRREGULARS {LAST PARA REF A} UNACCEPTABLE AND OUTLINING HIS DRAFT CABLE BY WHICH GENERAL WESTMORELAND COULD ADVISE GENERAL WHEELER OF OUR INABILITY TO AGREE. KOMER WEIGHED IN WITH REPLAY OF HIS THESIS, RECOMMENDING ACCEPTANCE MACV POSITION BUT ACKNOWLEDGING LOGIC IN SOME OF WASHINGTON VIEWS. I THEN REVIEWED HISTORY AND CONTEXT WHOLE ESTIMATE, THE SAIGON DISCUSSIONS, AND THE RATIONALE BEHIND EACH OF THE JOINT WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVES FIGURES, AND {AS TACTFULLY AS POSSIBLE} THE WAY THE PROCEDURE THROUGH WHICH NATIONAL ESTIMATES PRODUCED REDUCED OUR NEGOTIATING LATITUDE. I ALSO TOOK UP "QUANTIFICATION PARAGRAPH", INDICATING THAT DAVIDSON HAD QUOTED OUT OF CONTEXT AND SHOWING WHY WE THOUGHT IT MET BOTH WASHINGTON AND MACV NEEDS. I CONCLUDED WITH GENERAL REMARKS TRACING HISTORY OF U.S. MILITARY ESTIMATES ON VIETNAM SINCE 1956, NOTING THAT CONSISTENT RECORD OF UNDERESTIMATION PLUS RECENT {I.E. [REDACTED]} METHODOLOGY WHICH REQUIRED CONSTANT RETROACTIVE JUGGLING HAD CONTRIBUTED MIGHTILY TO OUR

25X1

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 3 SAIGON 1988 S E C R E T

CREDIBILITY PROBLEMS, THAT WE NEEDED BASELINE WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE ADJUSTED AGAIN, AND THAT WHEN IN DOUBT WE WERE ADVISED, FROM ALL ANGLES, TO ERR ON SIDE OF CAUTION RATHER THAN OPTIMISM.

4. WESTMORELAND MOST CORDIAL AND RECEPTIVE. SAID HE AGREED WITH MOST OF MY OBSERVATIONS AND COULD SEE THE CLEAR LOGIC BEHIND BOTH SETS OF FIGURES, WHICH WERE REALLY NOT THAT FAR APART. HE ALSO SAW THE RATIONALE BEHIND OUR "IRREGULAR QUANTIFICATION" PARAGRAPH AND HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH IT, THOUGH HE WOULD WANT TO TAKE A FINAL LOOK AT IT IN WRITING. HE ASKED IF I WOULD CONVENE BOTH THE WASHINGTON AND MACV ANALYSTS TO REVIEW THE EVIDENCE ONCE AGAIN AND SEE IF WE COULD RESOLVE OUR DIFFERENCES.

5. WHEN THE ANALYST MEETING WAS CONVENED (WITH DAVIDSON REPRESENTED BY HIS DEPUTY) I TOOK WESTMORELAND AT HIS WORD, USURPED THE CHAIR, AND ANNOUNCED THAT ALL CONSTRAINTS ON TOTALS WERE OFF AND WE COULD SETTLE DOWN TO SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF EVIDENCE AND ISSUES. DURING ABOUT FOUR HOURS OF BRISK DISCUSSION WE HAMMERED OUT THE FOLLOWING SET OF AGREED FIGURES, WHICH GENERAL WESTMORELAND HAS ALREADY ENDORSED: MAIN AND LOCAL FORCE 119,000, ADMIN SERVICES 35,000-40,000, GUERRILLAS 70,000-90,000 FOR MILITARY TOTAL SPREAD OF 224,000-249,000. POLITICAL 75,000 TO 85,000,

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 4 SAIGON 1988 S E C R E T

6. ON THE WHOLE, I THINK WE CAN LIVE QUITE COMFORTABLY WITH THE ABOVE FIGURES {WHICH THE DIA TEAM AND INR REP ENDORSE}. WE HAVE NO DISPUTE ON THE MAIN AND LOCAL FORCE 119,000 FIGURE. THE TEXT OF THE OPERATIVE SENTENCE IN OUR ADMIN SERVICE PARAGRAPH {SEE REF A} NOW READS "IN LIGHT OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, WE ESTIMATE THAT THERE ARE NOW AT LEAST 35,000-40,000 ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE PERSONNEL WHO ARE PERFORMING ESSENTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS FULL TIME." THE REST OF THE PARAGRAPH IS UNCHANGED. WE GAVE A LITTLE COSMETICALLY BUT I THINK THIS PRESERVES THE ESSENCE OF THE JUDGMENT IN THE 14.3 DRAFT.

7. THERE HAS BEEN SOME ADJUSTMENT ON GUERRILLAS, BUT THE NEW FIGURE {70,000-90,000} APPRECIABLY LIFTS MACV'S PREVIOUS TOTAL {65,000} AND HAS THE SAME MEDIAN {80,000} AS THE SPREAD IN THE 14.3 DRAFT.

8. WE GAVE A LITTLE ON THE POLITICAL FIGURE, PARTLY TO KEEP MACV ON THE RESERVATION WITH RESPECT TO THE GUERRILLAS, PARTLY BECAUSE MACV DID HAVE A CASE ON DOUBLE COUNTING {SOME BODIES IN BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL FIGURES, THOUGH THIS WAS NOT THE REASON MACV WHACKED THE FIGURE YESTERDAY}, AND PRIMARILY BECAUSE

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PAGE 5 SAIGON 1988 S E C R E T

THE DISCUSSION AND EVIDENCE CONVINCED ME THAT THIS IS NOT A VERY GOOD FIGURE ANYWAY. OUR PRESENT DEFINITIONS ARE NOT ADEQUATE OR SUFFICIENTLY PRECISE. WE INCLUDE MUCH MORE THAN THE REAL "LEADERSHIP" AND EXCLUDE MANY {E.G. SECURITY ELEMENTS} OF WHOM FORMAL COGNIZANCE SHOULD BE TAKEN.

9. ON ABOVE, WITH ENDORSEMENT MESSRS. HYLAND AND [ ] AND DIA REPS AND CONCURRENCE GENERAL DAVIDSON, I AM INITIATING MAJOR STUDY TO REFINE OUR POLITICAL CATEGORIES AND HENCE IMPROVE OUR POLITICAL HOLDINGS. TO THIS END, MR. ADAMS WILL REMAIN SAIGON TO GO OVER WHOLE SUBJECT IN DETAIL WITH MACV ANALYSTS AND OUR ICEX OFFICERS. FURTHER WORK WILL THEN BE CARRIED ON IN WASHINGTON UNDER [ ] AEGIS.

25X1

10. OUR AGREED FIGURES AND IRREGULAR QUANTIFICATION PARAGRAPH BEING GIVEN GENERAL WESTMORELAND IN WRITING TOMORROW. ONCE HE ADDS SIGNATURE TO ALREADY EXPRESSED VERBAL APPROVAL OUR MISSION SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED. I HAVE 1500 HOURS APPOINTMENT WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER ON 14 SEPTEMBER AND SHALL GIVE HIM FULL REPORT.

11. GENERAL WESTMORELAND HAS REQUESTED I WORK WITH GENERAL DAVIDSON AND GENERAL SIDLE TO PREPARE SCENARIO FOR

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13 SEP 67 IN 51159

S E C R E T 131225Z CITE SAIGON 1988  ACTING  
IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR  
FINAL SECTION OF 2

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25X1

PRESS BACKGROUNDER. I HAVE ACCEPTED SUBJECT YOUR CONCURRENCE.  
PLEASE ADVISE.

12. ON RETURNS, EARLY RESERVATIONS OUT OF SIAGON ALMOST  
IMPOSSIBLE OBTAIN. SUBJECT YOUR APPROVAL {PLEASE ADVISE  
IMMEDIATE} I HAVE AUTHORIZED MESSRS.  AND HYLAND USE  
THEIR PRESENT 14 SEPTEMBER PANAM RESERVATIONS. I HAVE RESERVA-  
TION FOR 16 SEPTEMBER BUT WILL NOT LEAVE UNTIL YOU CONCUR.  
REQUEST OUR WIVES BE ADVISED OF THESE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS.

25X1

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SECRET

SEP 13 1530Z  
DIR 35114

S E C R E T

TO: OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE SAIGON

25X1



RE SAIGON 1988 {IN 511593} PARAGRAPH 12.\*

WHOLE TEAM AUTHORIZED RETURN ANY TIME FROM NOW ON. IF YOU WANT  
TO WAIT UNTIL 16 SEPTEMBER, THAT IS ENTIRELY UP TO YOU. WIVES  
WILL BE ADVISE.

{END OF MESSAGE}

25X1  
25X1

C/S Comment: \*Messrs. [ ] and Hyland have reservations leave J4  
September. [ ] (1) has reservation for 16 September,  
but will not leave until [ ] concurs. 25X1

/S/  
RICHARD HELMS  
RELEASING OFFICER

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

SEP 13 1554Z  
DIRECTOR 35119

IMMEDIATE  
TO: SAIGON

25X1



RE SAIGON 1988 {IN 51159}, REGARDING PARAGRAPH 11. \*

1. HAVE NO OBJECTION TO YOUR UNDERTAKING WHAT GENERAL WESTMORELAND ASKS, BUT DO NOT REPEAT NOT FEEL THAT SUCH PRESS BACKGROUNDS SHOULD BE RELATED IN ANY WAY TO NIE PROCESS. WILL MAKE DETERMINATION ONLY AFTER YOU RETURN HERE WHETHER OR NOT ESTIMATE WILL BE ISSUED.

2. PLEASE DO NOT REPEAT NOT OVER READ OR MISREAD WHAT I HAVE SAID ABOVE.

{END OF MESSAGE}

C/S Comment: \*General Westmoreland requested [redacted] (1) work with 25X1 General Davidson and General Sidle to prepare scenario for press backgrounder.

/S/  
RICHARD HELSM  
RELEASING OFFICER

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~~SECRET~~

14 SEP 67 IN 5200

S E C R E T 141153Z CITE SAIGON 2043

ACTG}

25X1

PRIORITY DIRECTOR

25X1

1. GEN. WESTMORELAND HAS FORMALLY SIGNED  
OFF ON AGREED FIGURES AND IRREGULAR QUANTIFICATION  
PARAGRAPH. UNDERSTAND HE HAS FORMALLY REPORTED  
TO CHAIRMAN JCS THAT AGREEMENT ON FIGURES  
WAS REACHED AND HE HAS ENDORSED RESULT. THUS  
OUR BASIC MISSION NOW SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED.

2. I HAD GOOD SESSION WITH AMBASSADOR  
BUNKER, REPORTING OUR AGREEMENT WITH MACV  
AND OUTLINING SALIENT ELEMENTS OF  
THE DISCUSSIONS BUT OMITTING DETAILS NOW  
BETTER FORGOTTEN. HE REVIEWED AGREED FIGURES  
AND DRAFT PARAGRAPHS AND ENDORSED THEM WITHOUT  
RESERVATION. AMBASSADOR MOST PLEASED THAT  
WASHINGTON AND SAIGON COULD NOW SPEAK  
WITH ONE VOICE, WAS VERY COMPLIMENTARY  
ABOUT WASHINGTON DELEGATION MISSION AND SAID  
WESTMORELAND HAD ALREADY PHONED HIM TO

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PAGE 2 SAIGON 2043 S E C R E T

RELAY SIMILAR VIEWS.

3. AT BUNKER REQUEST, WE THEN ENGAGED  
IN NOTE AND IMPRESSION COMPARING DISCUSSION  
OF CURRENT POLITICAL SCENE, PARTICULARLY

25X1 [REDACTED] AMBASSADOR HAD  
HIGH PRAISE FOR STATION AND SUPPORT IT  
GIVES HIM. HE MADE PARTICULAR POINT OF  
25X1 PRAISING [REDACTED] PERFORMANCE  
AND PROFESSIONALISM, IN WHICH BUNKER OBVIOUSLY  
HAS GREAT CONFIDENCE.

4. AFTER BUNKER SESSION, I  
SPENT TWO HOURS WITH GEN. SIDLE, MACV  
PIO, DISCUSSING SCENARIO FOR PRESS  
BACKGROUND ON NEW FIGURES. MACV,  
PRESENTATION WILL MAKE NO MENTION  
WHATSOEVER OF NIE.

5. ONLY REMAINING TASK IS MENDING  
OF PERSONAL FENCES WITH GEN. DAVIDSON.  
HE IS ABLE OFFICER WITH WHOM STATION  
MUST DEAL CLOSELY AND WITH WHOM WE

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PAGE 3 SAIGON 2043 S E C R E T  
IN WASHINGTON SHOULD MAINTAIN RECIPROCALLY  
USEFUL COMMUNICATION. DAVIDSON AND I MEETING FOR  
DRINKS ON 15 SEPTEMBER.

B. EARLIEST AVAILABLE RESERVATION IS  
PAN AM 2 ON 16 SEPTEMBER. WILL STOP  
AT HONOLULU TO BRIEF CINCPAC STAFF  
AS PROMISED AND WILL BE AT HQS  
00B TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER.

S E C R E T

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14 SEP 67 IN 52035

S E C R E T 141153Z CITE SAIGON 2044 [ ] ACTG}

25X1

DIRECTOR [ ]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

1. MESSRS. HYLAND AND [ ] DEPARTED  
SAIGON PANAM 2 14 SEPT. [ ]  
TAKING LEAVE EN ROUTE AND WILL ADVISE  
HIS ETA WASHINGTON. MY HYLAND ETA  
DULLES 1640 HOURS SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER  
UNITED FLT 52.

25X1

2. MR. CARVER WILL DEPART SAIGON  
16 SEPT ON PAN AM 2 FOR HONOLULU. REQUEST  
[ ] ARRANGE WHATEVER CINCPAC BRIEFING CONFERENCES  
SEEM DESIRABLE AND ADVISE HIM ON  
ARRIVAL. HE HAS RESERVATIONS AT HAWAIIAN VILLAGE HOTEL.

3. MR. CARVER ETA DULLES 1640 HOURS  
MONDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER VIA UNITED 52.

4. REQUEST WIVES BE INFORMED ABOVE  
TRAVEL DETAILS.

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BRIEFING ON "CROSSOVER"

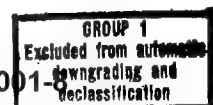
1. In the vu-graphs, the erratic ups and downs of the monthly figures have been smoothed into secular trends by using quarterly averages of the monthly figures.

2. In vu-graph #1 the black line shows the trend by quarters of "firm" enemy losses, including KIA, died or disabled from wounds, captured, and defected. An estimate is made that other losses (from disease, accident, and desertion) have amounted to between 2000 and 5000 a month during 1967 (less, earlier). The more conservative estimate is used in calculating the crossover point. The 13,000 monthly firm loss plus the 2,000 estimated "others" gives 15,000 a month total.

3. Vu-graph #2 shows infiltration of NVA. The blue lines give secular trends: dotted line for "accepted" and solid line for "accepted" plus "possible." The solid line is used in calculating crossover because it is felt that this is, again, the conservative approach.

4. The graph shows a wide range of possibilities for recent months, on which figures are incomplete. The Colonel has used an assumption of 3500-4500 a month in calculating crossover, although he believes the actual figure is much lower.

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S E C R E T

25X1

-2-

5. Vu-graph #3 shows estimated input from in-country recruitment. The new estimate for 1967, based on a study of documents and interrogations covering the first four months is 3500 a month, compared with the average of 7000 a month in 1966. The analysts believe it has declined further in recent months. In order to recognize that the rate did not abruptly drop by 50 percent at midnight 31 December, the drop is allocated over the last three months of 1966. The analysts believe that the drop actually began in the early summer.

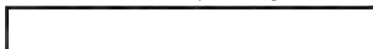
6. Vu-graph #4 develops the crossover points by combining the loss and input graphs developed in the three previous vu-graphs. The crossover of the "best estimates" occurs in November 1966. The Colonel holds that in 1967 the enemy's net loss has probably run (conservatively) at 5000 a month, making a total net loss of 40,000 for the year through August and a projected 60,000 for the whole year.

7. The two most obvious weak spots in the study are problems of definition: net losses from what, and what constitutes "recruitment." The Colonel's initial response to having this pointed out was to suggest a cut-off at the bottom of the guerrilla ranks. That is, he suggests net losses be deducted from the combined main-force, local force, and guerrilla total, and that movement from other than these forces into these forces be considered "recruitment." This means that

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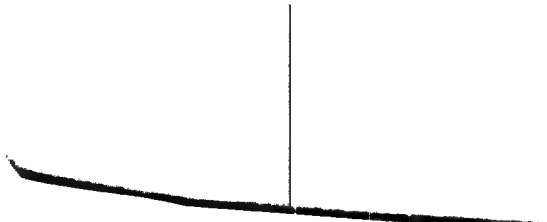


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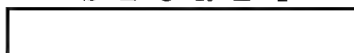
going from self-defense or assault youths to guerrillas or directly to main forces is recruitment whereas movement from guerrillas to local or main forces or joining the self-defense forces is not.

8. This gives a relatively small and limited base from which to subtract the net losses. The 40,000 to date in 1967 (plus some from 1966), which the briefing says is a compounding of conservative estimates, would put quite a dent in the existing OB. The more radical range, which gives a net monthly loss of 14,000 (18,000 minus 4000) threatens to wipe out the entire enemy force by some date 1968.

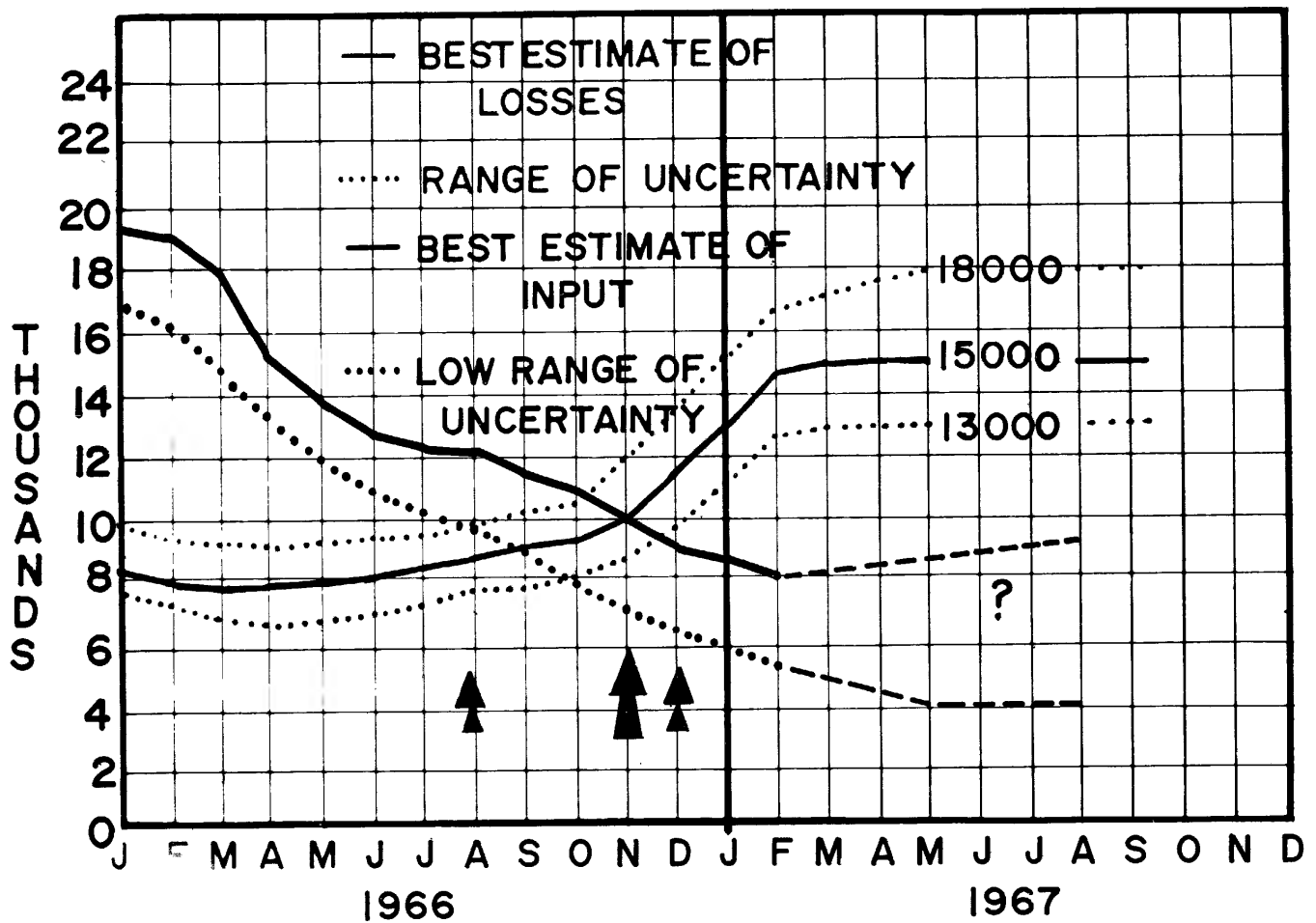
9. Two possible solutions are to expand the base to include forces below the guerrillas or, alternatively, to reduce the loss figures substantially to account for the killed, Hoi Chanh, etc. who are not from the guerrillas or main and local forces.



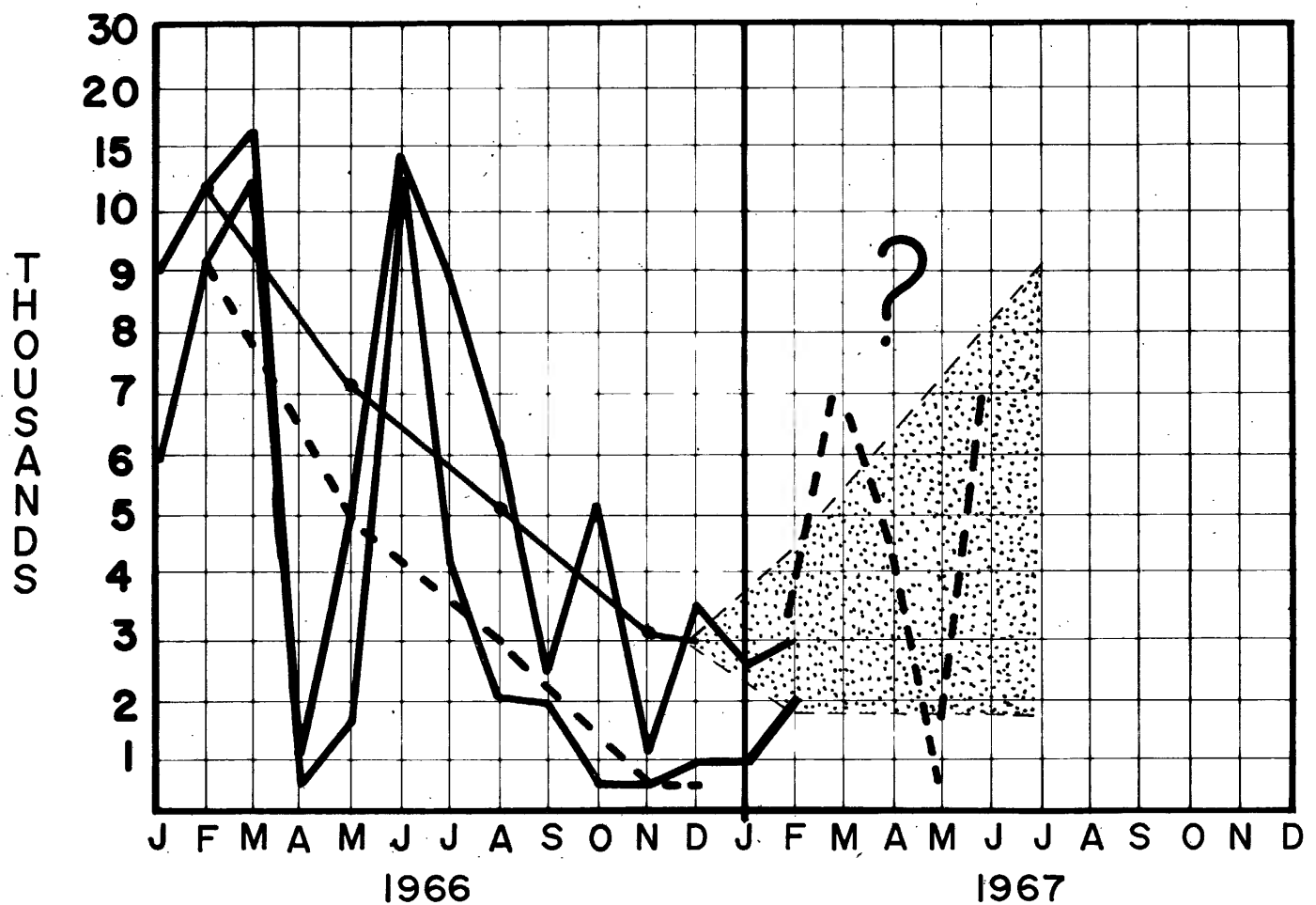
S E C R E T



## ENEMY LOSSES VS. INPUT



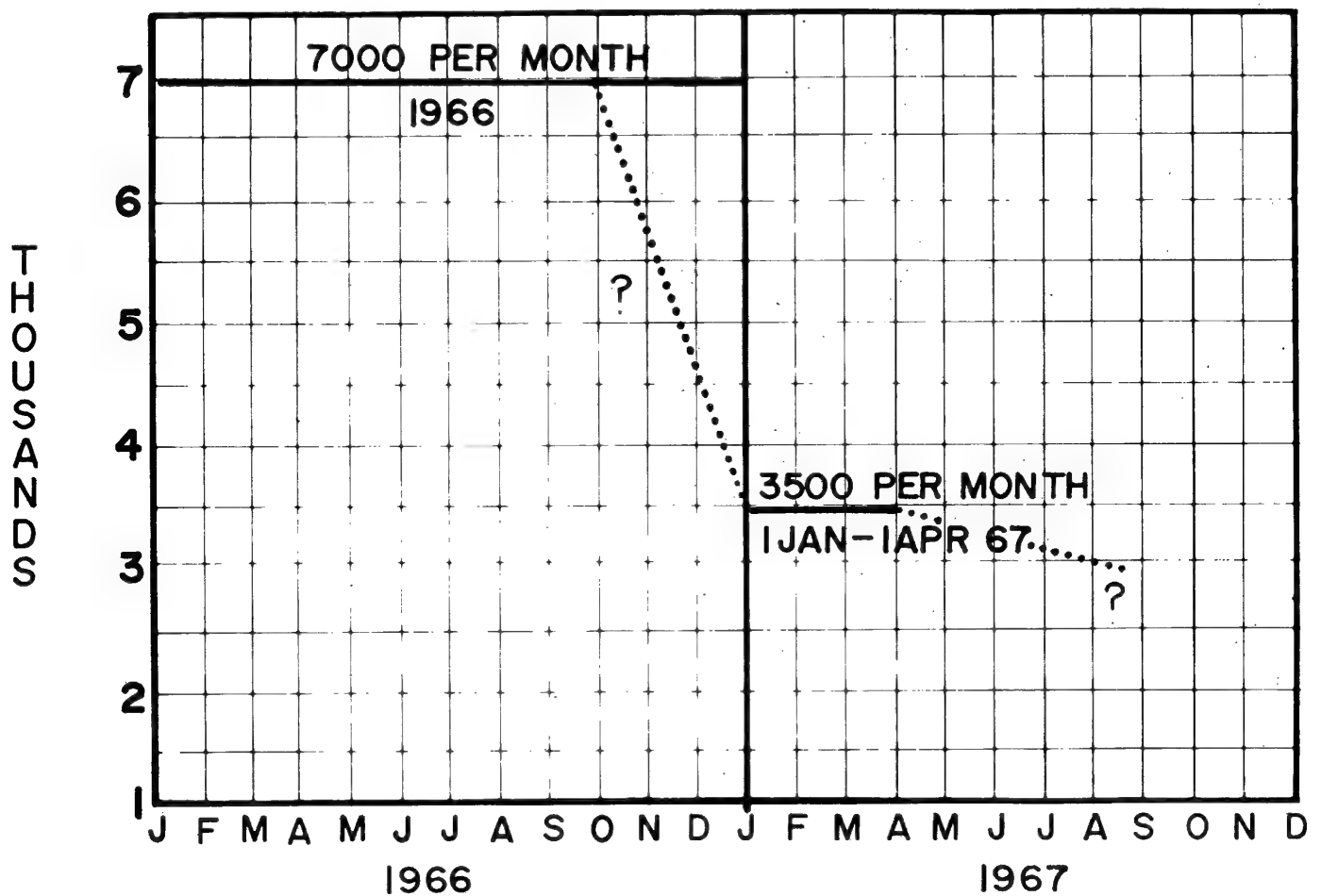
## ENEMY INFILTRATION JAN 66—MID 67



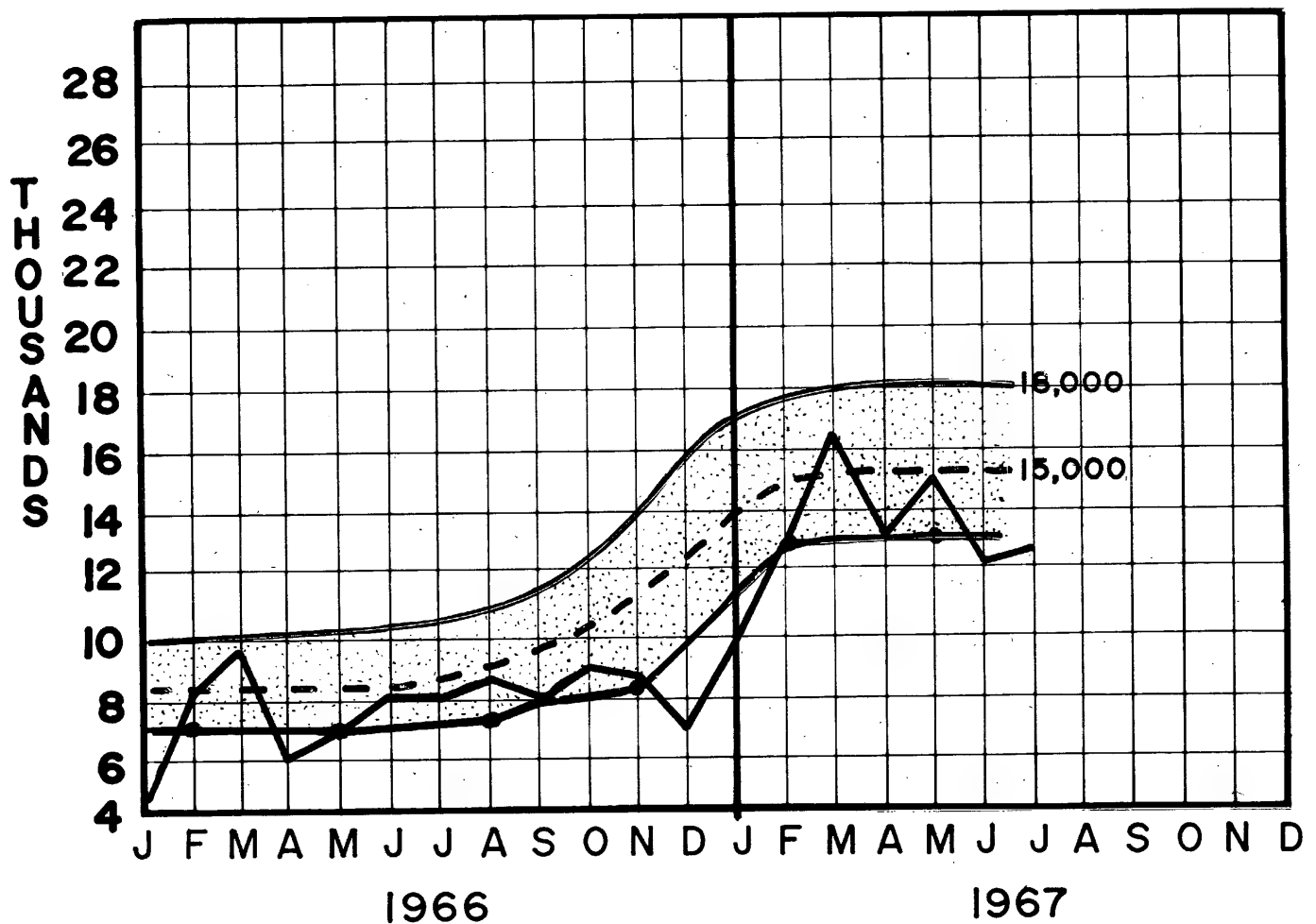
— TLT OF CONFIRMED, PROBABLE, POSSIBLE  
- - - TLT OF CONFIRMED & PROBABLE  
... AVERAGE MONTHLY RATES BY QUARTER



## ENEMY RECRUITMENT 1JAN66-1APR67



## ENEMY LOSSES JAN 66—JULY 67



— LOSSES BY MONTH  
— AVERAGE MONTHLY RATE BY QUARTER  
EST NON-BATTLE CASUALTIES & SIMPLE DESERTION

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

24 July 1967

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: SNIE 14.3-1-67: VIET CONG RECRUITMENT AND MORALE PROBLEMS

1. The office of the Honorable Walt W. Rostow has asked for a SNIE on the above subject, for USIB approval on 3 August. It is requested that appropriate analysts in your office attend a meeting at 1000, Tuesday, 25 July 1967, in Room 7E62 to discuss the subject and make oral contributions.

2. The purpose of this estimate will be to take account of the recent situation regarding VC recruitment and morale problems, and to make a judgment as to its implications.

3. Five paragraphs in the draft NIE 14.3-67, "Capabilities of the Vietnamese Communists for Fighting in South Vietnam" are devoted to these subjects, but Mr. Rostow wants this material sooner than it would be available through NIE 14.3-67, the USIB date of which has now been postponed pending resolution of some O/B problems. We propose to expand on the material in these five paragraphs for the subject SNIE. As a basis for our discussion, appropriate questions from the Terms of Reference of NIE 14.3-67 and the five pertinent paragraphs from the draft text are attached hereto. Your attention is also invited to Saigon Station's comments on this subject in paragraph 2 of SAIG 9124.

*implications*

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SNIE 14.3-67

13 November 1967

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**SPECIAL**  
**NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE**  
**NUMBER 14.3-67**

**Capabilities of the Vietnamese  
Communists for Fighting in  
South Vietnam**

*Submitted by*



DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

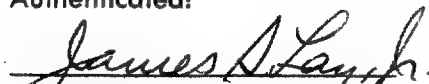
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*The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate:*

The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense, and the NSA.

**Concurring:**

Vice Adm. Rufus Taylor, Deputy Director, Central Intelligence

Mr. Thomas L. Hughes, the Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

Lt. Gen. Joseph F. Carroll, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

Lt. Gen. Marshall S. Carter, the Director, National Security Agency

**Abstaining:**

Mr. Howard C. Brown, Jr., the Assistant General Manager, Atomic Energy Commission and Mr. William O. Cregar, for the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

**WARNING**

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, USC, Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited.

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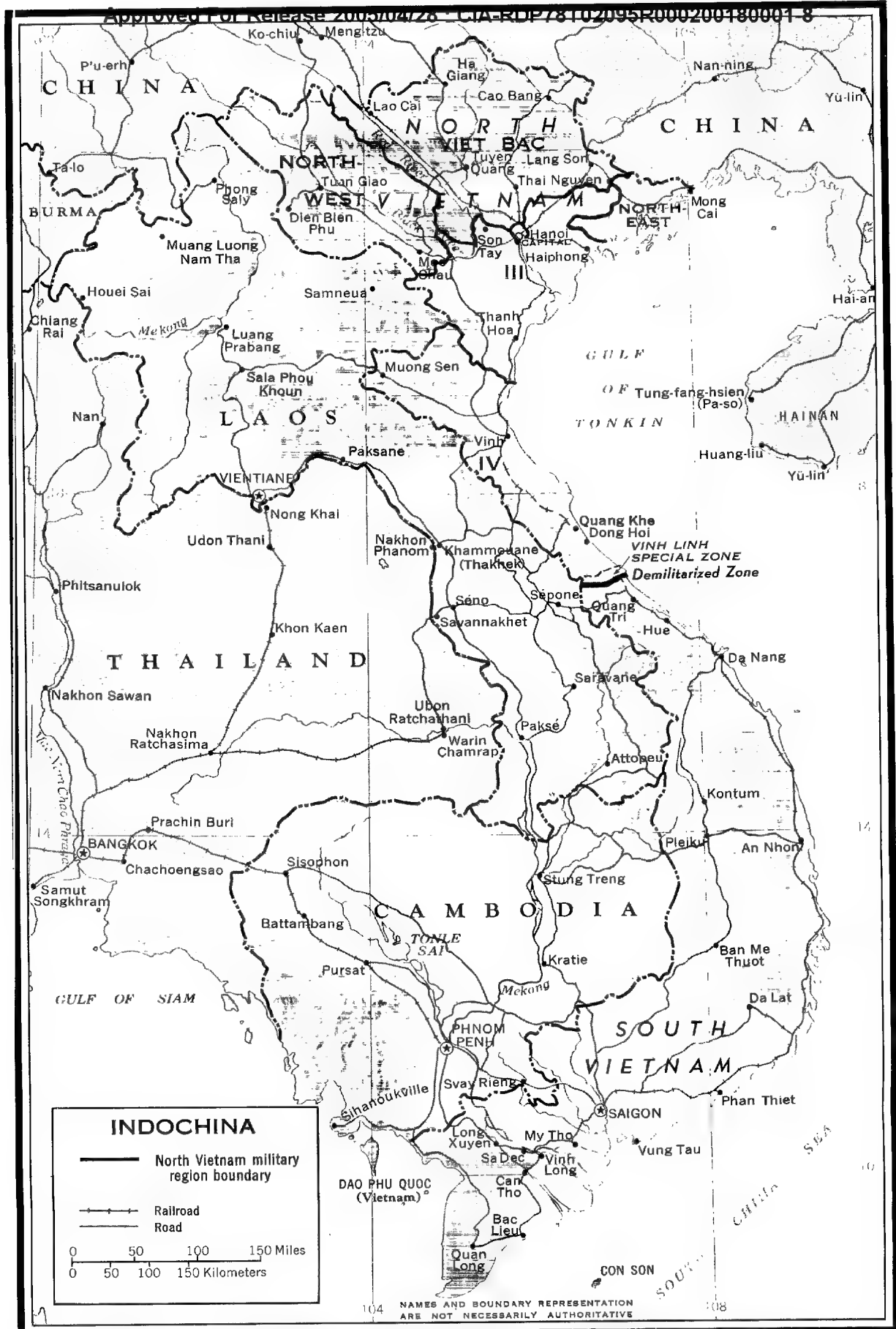
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## CAPABILITIES OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS FOR FIGHTING IN SOUTH VIETNAM<sup>1</sup>

### THE PROBLEM

To estimate the capabilities of the Vietnamese Communists to conduct military operations in South Vietnam over the next year or so.<sup>2</sup>

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Our earlier understanding of overall Communist capabilities in Vietnam had, of necessity, to rely heavily on data provided by the GVN. Much of this turned out to be unreliable, and in many instances our numerical estimates of Communist forces, other than for the Regular units, were too low. Our information has improved substantially in the past year or two, but the unconventional nature of the war poses difficult intelligence problems, the more so in a social environment where basic data is incomplete and often untrustworthy.

Manpower, for example, is a key element for the Communists but we lack precise basic data on population size, rates of growth, and age distribution for both North and South Vietnam. Assessing Communist capabilities also involves an understanding of the organization and effectiveness of the various components in the Communist military and political apparatus in South Vietnam. Much of the evidence on these components is obtained from a variety of sources, including captured documents, of varying reliability and timeliness. The analysis of this data, as well as that concerning North Vietnamese support to the South and all manpower questions requires complex methodological approaches which cannot rise above the uncertain data inputs.

<sup>1</sup> This estimate supersedes NIE 14.3-66, "North Vietnamese Military Potential for Fighting in South Vietnam," dated 7 July 1966, TOP SECRET.

<sup>2</sup> The figures in this estimate are current as of 1 October 1967.

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Our data and conclusions are therefore subject to continuing review and revision, especially since capabilities do not remain static. In this estimate we have concentrated on reaching the best judgments of the current strength of the Communist forces and, because of incomplete and unreliable basic data, we have not attempted to reconstruct Communist strength retrospectively.

Reservations with respect to evidence are explained where appropriate in the individual sections of the estimate. The main conclusions which follow, however, allow for such uncertainties in the supporting intelligence, represent our best appreciation of the overall situation as it now stands, and are based on the assumption that there is no radical change in the scale and nature of the war.

## CONCLUSIONS

A. During the past year, Hanoi's direct control and share of the burden of the war in South Vietnam has grown substantially. This trend will continue.

B. Manpower is a major problem confronting the Communists. Losses have been increasing and recruitment in South Vietnam is becoming more difficult. Despite heavy infiltration from North Vietnam, the strength of the Communist military forces and political organizations in South Vietnam declined in the last year.

C. The major portion of this decline has probably been felt at the lower levels, reflecting a deliberate policy of sacrificing these levels to maintain the structure of political cadres and the strength of the Regular military forces. In particular the guerrillas, now estimated to total some 70,000-90,000, have suffered a substantial reduction since the estimated peak of about early 1966. Regular force strength, now estimated at 118,000, has declined only slightly, but Viet Cong (VC) units are increasingly dependent upon North Vietnamese replacements.

D. Given current Communist strategy, and levels of operations, a major effort will be necessary if the Regular forces and the guerrillas are to be maintained at or near present levels. To do so will require both a level of infiltration much higher than that observed in 1967 and intensive VC recruitment as well. Considering all the relevant factors, however, we believe there is a fairly good chance that the

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overall strength and effectiveness of the military forces and the political infrastructure will continue to decline.

E. The Communist leadership is already having problems in maintaining morale and quality. These problems have not yet impaired overall military effectiveness, but they are likely to become more difficult.

F. Difficulties in internal distribution will continue to cause local shortages and interfere with Communist operations from time to time. But we believe that the Communists will be able to continue to meet at least their essential supply requirement for the level of forces and activities in South Vietnam described in this estimate.

G. Communist strategy is to sustain a protracted war of attrition and to persuade the US that it must pull out or settle on Hanoi's terms. Our judgment is that the Communists still retain adequate capabilities to support this strategy for at least another year. Whether or not Hanoi does in fact persist with this strategy depends not only on its capabilities to do so, but on a number of political and international considerations not treated in this estimate.

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## DISCUSSION

1. It has become increasingly obvious that Hanoi's share of the burden of war in South Vietnam has grown substantially. Infiltration of personnel in 1966, particularly into the northern provinces, was more than twice that of 1965. Hanoi's direct control of military and political operations has become more evident. The supply of weapons from the North has continued, and new weapons of greater firepower have been introduced. The logistical systems within North Vietnam and in Laos and Cambodia have been expanded since 1965 to provide a greater flexibility to cope with the effects of air interdiction, thereby enabling the Communists to meet higher levels of combat and support the growth of their forces to at least their present levels.

### I. CAPABILITIES OF NORTH VIETNAM

#### A. Manpower and Mobilization Potential

2. The growing intensity of the war in the South and more than two years of US air strikes against the North have made manpower an increasingly important aspect in estimating Communist capabilities. Since mid-1965 the North Vietnamese Armed Forces have expanded from an estimated 250,000 men to at least 470,000. This expansion includes those troops in Laos and South Vietnam. The bulk of the physically fit draft age class of 17-year-olds (about 100,000 each year) is being taken into military service. The war in general and the bombing in particular have forced Hanoi to divert from 500,000 to 600,000 civilians (men and women, young and old) to full-time and part-time war-related activities.

3. Nevertheless, it does not appear that North Vietnam is encountering insurmountable problems in obtaining sufficient able-bodied men to support the war in South Vietnam. Of North Vietnam's total population of over 18 million, about 4 million or so are males between 15 and 49, and about half of these are probably physically fit for military service.<sup>3</sup> At present, the North Vietnamese Armed Forces have taken less than one-quarter of the fit males aged 15 to 49 and less than two-fifths of the approximately 1.2 million fit males in the prime military ages of 17 to 35. Though there is some evidence of lowering of draft standards and extending of age limits, it appears that, with a few local exceptions, Hanoi is still drafting only those between the ages of 17 and 35.

4. The number of physically fit males above and beyond the annual increment of those reaching age 17 and who are not yet in the armed forces is substantial. The most obvious source of manpower is agriculture, where there are almost 3 million men of all ages, and where per capita production is low. There are also about half a million men in the service sector of the economy, including

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<sup>3</sup> These figures are based on US Census Bureau estimates of North Vietnam's population, which do not accept entirely the figures of North Vietnam's 1960 census and subsequent demographic statistics published through 1963.

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170,000 in consumer services; almost half a million men in industry, over half of whom are in handicrafts; and some 60,000 male students of military age.

5. There is of course no fixed percentage of these men who can be spared for military duty. Hanoi has already drawn men from the civilian economy for military and war-related tasks, replacing them where possible with women. Taking large additional numbers of men would obviously involve some additional costs to the civilian economy, but this would be a question of priorities in Hanoi. Losses in agricultural and industrial production can be made up by imports to the extent necessary to maintain essential subsistence levels of consumption; consumer services are to some degree expendable and education can be postponed. Thus we believe that the manpower problem, while growing more serious, is still manageable in North Vietnam. At a conservative estimate we believe there are some 100,000 to 200,000 men who could be called into military service, in addition to the annual draft class.

#### B. The Armed Forces

6. The North Vietnamese Armed Forces expanded last year and are now estimated to total about 470,000. Despite better evidence on their strength, there are still some uncertainties concerning the actual strength of units, the number of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops in Laos, and the size of the Armed Public Security Forces. The following table should be regarded as a conservative estimate.

TABLE 1  
ESTIMATED NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES  
1 October 1967  
SUMMARY

Army .....	447,500
Air Force .....	4,500
Navy .....	2,500
Armed Public Security Forces .....	16,500
TOTAL Armed Forces .....	471,000
North Vietnamese Army Breakdown	
Out-of-Country	
South Vietnam .....	54,000
Laos .....	18,000
TOTAL .....	72,000
In-Country	
Infantry .....	171,500
Air Defense <sup>a</sup> .....	93,000
Other <sup>b</sup> .....	111,000
TOTAL .....	375,500

<sup>a</sup> This includes only regular army personnel in AAA units, radar, and SAM battalions. It does not include part-time air defense personnel such as militia, or logistical troops supporting air defense.

<sup>b</sup> This includes artillery, armor, high command, logistics, engineers, and transportation.

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7. If the recruitment of men for replacements and for unit infiltration into the South should become a critical problem for Hanoi, as a last resort it could draw down its standing military establishment in North Vietnam. The number of troops which could be released for out-of-country duty would be influenced greatly by Hanoi's concern to retain a sizable force for defense against a possible invasion. If, for example, Hanoi should want to keep some 225,000 troops for the defense of North Vietnam and another 85,000 as a training base and for command and administration, then some 65,000 additional NVA troops could be made available for use outside of North Vietnam.

#### C. Military Training and Leadership

8. Special preinfiltration training of North Vietnamese recruits has averaged about 3 months, although increasing numbers of prisoners report training of only 1 month prior to infiltration. There is evidence of a growing deficiency of properly trained personnel to fill the ranks of squad leaders, platoon sergeants, and platoon leaders. There are indications that the normal source of platoon leaders, the Infantry Officers' School near Son Tay, has reduced its 2-year course to 8 months. The bulk of the reserve officers and noncommissioned officers have been recalled to active duty. The largest single source of junior officers is now from battlefield commissions.

#### D. Infiltration

9. North Vietnam has the capability to train 75,000-100,000 men a year for infiltration. By shortening current training cycles or increasing the number of units involved in the training of new recruits, this number could be substantially increased. Training replacements at the rate of 75,000-100,000 annually, however, would not permit organizing all of them into units and providing them with the necessary leadership at the same rate. Theoretically, North Vietnam could train and form 24-36 infantry regiments (48,000-72,000 men) per year, but at this pace there would be a considerable reduction in quality. In any case, actual formation and training of organized units for infiltration has been well short of this theoretical capability.

10. During 1966 at least 55,000 and possibly as many as 86,000 North Vietnamese troops were sent into South Vietnam (see Table 2). Through July 1966, the bulk of the infiltration was accounted for by the introduction of organized infantry regiments, including three regiments that moved directly across the DMZ. After July the pace of infiltration slackened somewhat, and it appeared that the Communist Regular force structure had reached planned levels. Most of the infiltration thereafter was to provide replacements in existing units.

11. During 1967, however, the introduction of organized units resumed—six regiments thus far—and the flow of individual replacements has continued. This mixture of units and individual replacements, plus the special situation along the DMZ, complicates an estimate of total infiltration. Not only is there the usual lag in identifying new units and infiltration groups, but there is less chance

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TABLE 2  
MONTHLY INFILTRATION: 1966-1967 \*  
(Data as of 30 September 1967)

		Accepted			Possible	Monthly
		Confirmed	Probable	TOTAL		TOTALS
1966	Jan	4,200	1,800	6,000	3,000	9,000
	Feb	6,900	2,200	9,100	2,100	11,200
	Mar	11,700	1,400	13,100	3,600	16,700
	Apr	100	500	600	600	1,200
	May	1,300	500	1,800	3,600	5,400
	June	12,300	700	13,000	1,700	14,700
	July	4,000	700	4,700	4,100	8,800
	Aug	1,800	400	2,200	3,700	5,900
	Sept	1,400	700	2,100	600	2,700
	Oct	100	600	700	4,700	5,400
	Nov	500	100	600	600	1,200
	Dec	800	600	1,400	2,500	3,900
TOTAL 1966		45,100	10,200	55,300	30,800	86,100
1967	Jan	1,000	800	1,800	3,600	5,400
	Feb	1,700	2,000	3,700	1,300	5,000
	Mar	3,600	400	4,000	4,600	8,600
	Apr	3,700	600	4,300	300	4,600
	May	2,700	1,500	4,200	1,600	5,800
	June	3,300	—	3,300	300	3,600
	July	—	400	400	—	400
	Aug	1,100	—	1,100	700	1,800
	Sept	—	—	—	—	—

\* Infiltration includes only arrivals in South Vietnam. Statistics for 1967 are subject to retroactive updating because of the continuing receipt of new information. In particular, the figures for the last 6 months or so are incomplete, and inadequate to determine trends. These figures include the following categories:

ACCEPTED: *Accepted Confirmed*: A confirmed infiltration unit/group is one which is accepted in South Vietnam on the basis of information provided by a minimum of two POW's or returnees from the unit/group, or two captured documents from the unit, or a combination of personnel and documents.

*Accepted Probable*: A probable infiltration unit/group is one which is accepted in South Vietnam on the basis of information provided by one POW or returnee from the unit/group, or a captured document, supported by information from other sources which can be evaluated as probably true.

POSSIBLE: A *possible* infiltration unit/group is one which may be in South Vietnam on the basis of information which can be evaluated as possibly true even though no POW, returnee, or document is available to verify the reports.

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of capturing personnel or documents from each of the numerous small replacement groups. There is also the problem of the units that suffer casualties in the DMZ area and return to North Vietnamese territory for replacements; these latter cannot always be identified as new infiltrators when the units return to South Vietnamese territory. A similar problem applies to other border areas.

12. Infiltration thus far in 1967 totals about 35,000 in all categories (accepted and possible). Allowing for the probability that later information will raise these figures, and extrapolating, it now appears that total infiltration for 1967 will be no more than last year's and possibly somewhat less. We estimate that some 65 to 75 percent of the infiltration will probably consist of replacement personnel for existing units. The remainder will probably include seven to nine organized regiments which will add to the Communist force structure but not necessarily their total military strength, because losses have resulted in generally lower unit strengths. There still appears to be no clear-cut seasonal pattern in infiltration or any significant indication that Hanoi is unwilling to dispatch additional men and units to South Vietnam.

#### E. LOCs<sup>4</sup>

13. Supplies for Communist forces move into South Vietnam by various means. In North Vietnam, truck, rail, and water transport are used to bring supplies through Military Region 4 (MR-4). From MR-4, most supplies are trucked through Laos, although some use of waterways is also made in Laos. Some supplies move directly across the DMZ, and some are moved by sea. In addition, some supplies from Cambodia enter South Vietnam directly while others are routed through Laos.

14. *Roads.* The Communist logistical roadnet in MR-4 in North Vietnam and in Laos was improved over the past year. Though the improvements have increased tonnage capacities somewhat, they were intended primarily to provide additional flexibility for the system and better year-round movement. One development was the extension of a new motorable road from Laos directly into the A Shau Valley of South Vietnam. In addition, the administration and operational control of the LOCs have been improved and expanded. The capacity of the entire system for delivery of supplies to South Vietnam through Laos continues to be limited by the capacities of the routes in Laos rather than by those of North Vietnam.

15. *Trucks.* We estimate that at the end of 1965 the North Vietnamese had an inventory of between 11,000 and 12,000 trucks. Losses from air attack have been substantial, and North Vietnam has been forced to increase its imports to counter this attrition. Imports from Eastern Europe, the USSR, and China have enabled North Vietnam roughly to maintain the size of its inventory.

16. Maintenance problems have increased, and as many as 30 percent of the trucks may not be operable on a daily basis. There is a lack of well-equipped,

<sup>4</sup> See centerspread map.

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properly manned maintenance facilities, and the variety of truck imports has resulted in a fleet of over 30 models from at least seven different countries. POL imports into North Vietnam during the first half of 1967 have been at record levels, and we have had no evidence of any serious POL shortages affecting the movement of supplies to South Vietnam.

17. *Waterways.* The coastal and inland waterway system in North Vietnam provides a useful supplement to the road and rail system and has been used extensively, particularly since the start of the US bombing program. Although the mining of some North Vietnamese waterways has reduced the movement of large craft, small boat traffic continues. Increasing imports of barges and barge sections into North Vietnam and a program of waterway improvement indicate that the Communists intend to exploit further the potentialities of these water routes. In Laos, there has been increased use of small pirogues and motor-boats on rivers over the last year. The use of these waterways will probably continue to increase.

18. *Rail.* The North Vietnamese also use the rail line south of Hanoi for movement of supplies into MR-4. Despite repeated US air attacks, the North Vietnamese have been able to construct bypasses and keep sections of the line serviceable from Hanoi to Vinh. South of Vinh the rail line is not operable for regular rail equipment. The North Vietnamese can only use light gear, principally trucks with converted wheels, to transport supplies over the remaining rail segment in this area.

19. *Impact of Air Attacks.* Air attacks in North Vietnam, Laos, and the DMZ have destroyed trucks, railroad rolling stock, and watercraft, have damaged the highway and rail systems, and have restricted the movement of cargo and personnel particularly during daylight hours. They have created construction problems and delays, caused interruptions in the flow of men and supplies, caused a great loss of work-hours, and forced North Vietnam to tie up large numbers of people in air defense and in the repair of LOCs. Communist countermeasures in North Vietnam and Laos have included diversification of the means of transport to include greater use of inland waterways and porter trails, construction of alternate roads, and of multiple bypasses at important bridges. A number of truck parks and vehicle pull-offs for quick convoy dispersal have been built. These measures have increased the ability of the Communists to cope with the effects of air attacks, although at a considerable cost and effort. Units and personnel moving to South Vietnam have been forced to move under cover of darkness, slowing their movement and subjecting them to the rigors of the trail for longer periods.

20. *Cambodia.* The importance of Cambodia as a sanctuary and a source of supply (principally rice) to the Communist war effort is substantial and growing.<sup>5</sup> Recently captured documents indicate that some Communist units in Tay Ninh

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<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this subject, see SNIE 57-67, "Significance of Cambodia to the Vietnamese Communist War Effort," dated 19 January 1967, SECRET. We believe the conclusions are still valid.

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Province have substantially increased their purchases in Cambodia since March 1966. The movement of supplies in Cambodia to Communist forces along the border, particularly on the Se San and Tonle Kong Rivers in the northeast and along Route 110 in Laos, has increased in the past year. Indications are that Communist units along the Cambodian border have been stockpiling some of the food and other materials obtained from Cambodia.

21. There is still no good evidence, however, that substantial amounts of weapons or ammunition are being obtained by the Communists from Cambodian stocks or through Cambodian ports. On the other hand, there is evidence that Communist units, particularly in the border area, receive arms and ammunition from stockpiles maintained on Cambodian territory. These munitions probably were moved south through Laos. Should infiltration of arms into South Vietnam through Laos be substantially reduced, Cambodia could be an alternative route for the Communists.

22. *Sea Infiltration.* We are unable to estimate the extent of the infiltration of supplies by sea into South Vietnam. We believe, however, that such infiltration has been greatly reduced by US counterefforts. Much of the Communists' use of sea routes, at present, is for the movement of supplies along the South Vietnamese coast. We believe that when a pressing need exists North Vietnam will increase attempts to move some supplies by sea, primarily arms and ammunition.

## II. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE SOUTH

### A. Communist Forces

23. For the purpose of this estimate, we consider the following elements of the Communist organization in South Vietnam: the Regular forces (NVA and VC Main and Local forces), the administrative service units which support them, the VC guerrilla forces, the political cadres, the self-defense forces, the secret self-defense forces, and the "Assault Youth." The contribution of these diverse elements to the Communist effort in South Vietnam differs widely in value. Their capabilities and missions are set forth in the following paragraphs.

24. We believe that, with the exception of the Regular forces, we have previously underestimated the strength of these elements. The figures carried in this estimate for these elements reflect new information and analysis rather than an increase in actual Communist strength. Furthermore, our information on the strength and organization of the different elements varies widely. For the Regular forces it is good; for other components it is much less reliable, less current, and less detailed. The resulting uncertainties are explained in the following paragraphs and are reflected by the use of ranges in the estimates we present.

25. *Regular Forces.* We are reasonably confident that the Communist Regular forces in South Vietnam now total about 118,000 troops who are generally well-armed (see Table 3). This strength has fluctuated over the past 12 months; it is now somewhat less than it was at this time last year. During this period,

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however, an increasing number of NVA replacements have been introduced into VC Main force units.

TABLE 3  
ESTIMATED STRENGTH OF REGULAR COMMUNIST FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM  
(As of 1 October 1967)

Type	Number	Organization
Regular NVA Forces	54,000	3 Front Headquarters <sup>a</sup> 7 Division Headquarters <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup> 26 Regiments (18 divisional and 8 separate) 106 Battalions (76 regimental and 30 separate)
VC Main and Local Forces	64,000 <sup>d</sup>	2 Division Headquarters <sup>b</sup> 11 Regiments (7 divisional and 4 separate) 96 Battalions (34 regimental and 62 separate) 234 Separate Companies 54 Separate Platoons
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118,000</b>	

<sup>a</sup> A Front is a military organization designed to perform tactical and administrative functions and to control a number of units in a specific area. A Front is intentionally flexible, its military force composition changes as operational requirements dictate. Vietnamese Communist Fronts currently operating against South Vietnam are the B-3 Front, the DMZ Front, and the Northern Front or Subregion (now called the Tri-Thien-Hue Military Region). (See map on page 17.)

<sup>b</sup> NVA/VC divisions in South Vietnam are considered as light infantry divisions tailored specifically for operation in South Vietnam. These divisions are highly foot-mobile and are flexible in force structure, organization, and strength. They normally are composed of three regiments (of about 1,500-2,000 per regiment) with varying technical and fire support elements. They lack wheeled transport and the type of artillery normally associated with NVA conventional divisions.

<sup>c</sup> In addition to the seven NVA divisions in South Vietnam, elements of the 341st division in North Vietnam have been committed from time to time to operations south of the DMZ under control of the DMZ Front.

<sup>d</sup> This total includes some NVA replacements; see paragraph 56.

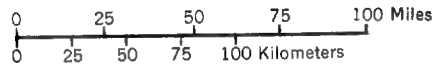
26. *Administrative Service Units.* There is an extensive system for the administrative support of both NVA and VC Regular forces. It operates throughout South Vietnam and extends into Laos and Cambodia as well as the area immediately north of the DMZ. In South Vietnam it includes the military personnel in the staff and service elements (e.g., medics, ordnance, logistics, etc.) comprising the central, regional, provincial and district military headquarters, and in rear service technical units of all types directly subordinate to these headquarters. The need for administrative service forces, and hence their size, varies widely from province to province.

27. We cannot be confident of the total size of the administrative service forces at any given time. Information on the current strength of the administrative services at the various echelons is insufficient to establish a firm estimate. This force has almost certainly suffered attrition and has probably been drawn down to provide some combat replacements. Moreover, we do not estimate

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# LAOS PANHANDLE AREA COMMUNIST ROADNET



## EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNIST ROADNET



Map of North Vietnam showing Communist roadnet, other roads, and personnel infiltration routes. The map includes labels for neighboring countries (North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, China/Hainan), major cities (Hanoi, Vinh, Ha Tinh, Dong Hoi, Hue, Da Nang, Kontum, Pleiku, Apia, Hau Bon), and rivers (Song Ca, Nam Theun, Sèno, Sè Bang Htieng, Se Kong, Se San, Mekong). It also shows the Gulf of Tonkin and the Demilitarized Zone. A legend indicates Communist roadnet (thick line), other road (thin line), and personnel infiltration (by foot) (dashed line). A note specifies motorable road capacity in short tons per day for June 1967: Dry season -> 500/100 -> Rainy season.



the size of the administrative service units located outside the boundaries of South Vietnam which support the forces in the DMZ and the western highlands. In light of these considerations, we estimate that there are now at least 35,000-40,000 administrative service personnel in South Vietnam who are performing essential administrative support functions. In addition, almost anyone under VC control can be and is impressed into service to perform specific administrative or support tasks as local conditions require.

28. *Guerrillas.* The guerrillas provide an essential element of the VC combat capability. They are organized into squads and platoons which are not necessarily restricted to their home village or hamlet. Typical missions for guerrillas are terrorist and sabotage activities, protection of villages and hamlets, provision of assistance to VC Main and Local force units as well as NVA, and the creation of local threats in order to divert allied forces to local security missions.

29. The guerrilla force has been subject to conflicting pressures. On the one hand, increasing numbers of guerrillas have been drawn upon to provide replacements for the VC Main and Local forces, because these have suffered heavy casualties as a result of more intense combat. At the same time, numerous captured documents as well as VC propaganda indicate a concern to increase the guerrilla force substantially. There is evidence which suggests that the leadership set very high force goals for the guerrillas but had, by mid-1966, fallen far short of its aims.

30. Information from captured documents leads us to believe that we have previously underestimated the guerrilla strength. Certain Communist documents which date from early 1966 assert that there were then about 170,000-180,000 guerrillas. This figure was almost certainly exaggerated. There is evidence which suggests that the Communists sometimes consider other groups part of the guerrilla force and therefore carry a larger number of guerrillas on their rolls. There is also considerable uncertainty over the accuracy of VC reporting at the lower levels. We believe that guerrilla strength has declined over the past year or so because of losses, upgrading of some personnel to Main and Local force units, and recruiting difficulties. We are unable to substantiate the extent to which the VC have been able to replace guerrilla losses. Considering all the available evidence and allowing for some uncertainties, we estimate that the current strength of the guerrilla force is 70,000-90,000.

31. *The Political Organization.* Presiding over the Communist effort is the political apparatus. This includes the leadership and administration of the National Liberation Front (NLF) and the People's Revolutionary Party (the name under which the North Vietnamese Communist Party operates in South Vietnam), both of which extend down to the hamlet level. The apparatus not only acts as a government in VC-controlled areas but also has major responsibilities for maintaining morale and for mobilizing manpower and other resources in support of the war effort. Its functions are not primarily military and it is therefore not included in the military order of battle. Nevertheless, it does represent a continuing potential for organizing and motivating the military forces. Through this apparatus the Communists seek to control the people of

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South Vietnam. It is, therefore, a key element which ultimately will have to be overcome along with the military and guerrilla forces. Its numbers are large—with a hard core estimated at about 75,000-85,000—but more important is the wide geographical extent of its power and the dedication and effectiveness of its personnel.

32. *Other Communist Organizations.* The Communists make a deliberate effort to organize most of the people under their control into various work forces and semimilitary organizations. Among the more significant of these organizations are the self-defense forces, secret self-defense forces, and groups such as the "Assault Youth." Moreover, when occasion demands, almost every able-bodied person under VC control may be called upon to support the war effort.

33. The self-defense force is described by the Communists as a military organization. It is clear, however, that its organization and mission differ from that of village and hamlet guerrillas. Self-defense forces include people of all ages and a substantial percentage of them are females. They are largely unarmed and only partially trained. The duties of self-defense units include the maintenance of law and order, the construction of bunkers and strong points, warning against the approach of allied forces, and the defense of villages and hamlets in VC-controlled territory. Self-defense forces do not leave their home areas, and members generally perform their duties part-time. Their existence poses an impediment to allied sweeps and pacification, however, and in their defensive role, they inflict casualties on allied forces.

34. Another element, the secret self-defense forces, operates in government-controlled and contested areas. They provide a residual Communist presence in such areas and support the Communist effort primarily by clandestine intelligence activities.

35. During the past year we have learned more about a VC organization called "Assault Youth." They serve full time at district level and above, and they are organized into companies and platoons. Although some are armed, the Communists do not consider them a combat force; their primary mission appears to be logistical, frequently in battlefield areas. This organization also serves as a manpower pool and provides a training program for youth who later go into the VC Main and Local forces. Little information is available to indicate the strength or distribution of the "Assault Youth."

36. Our current evidence does not enable us to estimate the present size of these groups (self-defense, secret self-defense, the "Assault Youth," or other similar VC organizations) with any measure of confidence. Some documents suggest that in early 1966 the aggregate size of the self-defense force was on the order of 150,000. This force and the other groups, however, have unquestionably suffered substantial attrition since that time, as well as an appreciable decline in quality, because of losses, recruiting of some of their members into the guer-

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rillas or other VC military components and, particularly, the shrinkage in VC control of populated areas. Though in aggregate numbers these groups are still large and constitute a part of the overall Communist effort, they are not offensive military forces. Hence, they are not included in the military order of battle total. Nevertheless, some of their members account for a part of the total Communist military losses.

37. In sum, the Communist military and political organization is complex, and its aggregate numerical size cannot be estimated with confidence. Moreover, any such aggregate total would be misleading since it would involve adding components that have widely different missions and degrees of skill or dedication. The VC/NVA Military Force (Main and Local forces, administrative service elements and guerrillas) can be meaningfully presented in numerical totals and, as indicated above, we estimate that this Military Force is now at least 223,000-248,000. It must be recognized, however, that this Military Force constitutes but one component of the total Communist organization. Any comprehensive judgment of Communist capabilities in South Vietnam must embrace the effectiveness of all the elements which comprise that organization, the total size of which is of course considerably greater than the figure given for the Military Force.

#### B. The Command Structure

38. The Communists have continued to modify their command apparatus, and, in particular, Hanoi has significantly increased its direct control. This is most apparent in the DMZ and central highlands areas where Hanoi increasingly bypasses both COSVN and Military Region 5 (MR-5) Headquarters. With the exception of two VC divisions and one NVA division, all division headquarters and all the confirmed Fronts are in MR-5 or the DMZ area.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the creation of the DMZ Front, which is controlled directly by Hanoi, it appears almost certain that MR-5 has been divided into three operational areas: The Tri-Thien-Hue Military Region (formerly the Northern Front or Subregion), the B-3 or Western Highlands Front, and the remaining coastal provinces of the region.<sup>7</sup> There is substantial evidence that Hanoi also exercises direct military control over the Tri-Thien-Hue Military Region and the B-3 Front.

#### C. Logistical Support

39. During the past year captured documents and POW interrogations have provided a better basis for estimating how much of each class of supplies was needed and consumed by the Communist forces. Table 4 shows the estimated total daily Communist requirement in South Vietnam for Regular and Administrative Service Forces and that portion of it which comes from external sources.

40. About one-quarter of the daily requirement for both 1966 and 1967 was drawn from sources outside of South Vietnam. There is a growing dependence

<sup>6</sup> The remainder of the command structure consists of provincial commands and of separate units, both directly subordinate to the respective VC military regions.

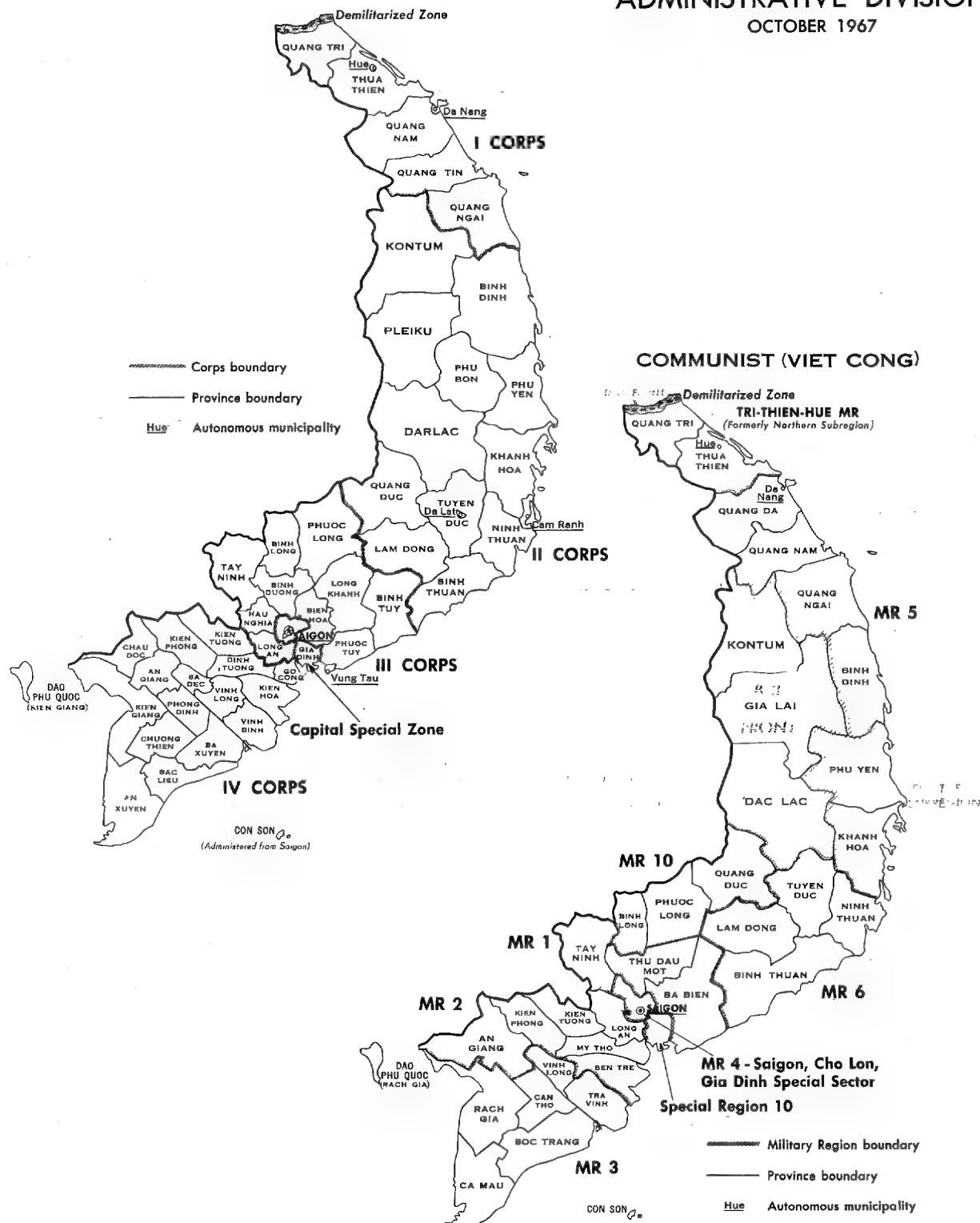
<sup>7</sup> See map on opposite page for provinces included in these areas.

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## REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

SOUTH VIETNAM  
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

OCTOBER 1967



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on external sources, not only for Classes II and IV (weapons and equipment), Class V (ammunition), but also for Class I (food). This is partly because of allied denial efforts and partly a result of the growing proportion of North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam, especially since these are generally deployed in food deficit areas. VC guerrilla forces probably require a small amount of food and ammunition from external sources, but the bulk of their supplies is obtained from local sources within South Vietnam. We have not included guerrilla forces in the logistical computations.

TABLE 4

ESTIMATED DAILY LOGISTICAL RESUPPLY REQUIREMENTS FOR NVA AND VC  
REGULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM<sup>a</sup>  
(As of 30 September 1967)

Class	Short Tons Per Day	
	External	Total
I (Food) <sup>b</sup> .....	38-40	177-183
II & IV (Weapons, Quartermaster, Engineer, Medical, Signal, Chemical, etc.) .....	6-7	23-24
III (POL) .....	Negl.	Negl.
V (Ammunition) <sup>c</sup> .....	10	11
TOTAL .....	54-57	211-218

<sup>a</sup> Based on 118,000 NVA and VC Main and Local force troops, and 35,000-40,000 administrative support troops. Requirements are computed on the basis of actual strength, which is about 70 percent of full TO&E strength. In estimating weapons requirements, losses due to capture or destruction were considered, as were losses due to normal attrition. In addition, an allowance was made to provide for the reequipping of those forces who are not presently equipped with the new family of weapons. These requirements, of course, will change as weapons losses fluctuate over time. Ammunition requirements are based upon estimates of actual ammunition expenditures in combat, and may be subject to a considerable margin of error.

<sup>b</sup> Includes a 15 percent factor for spoilage, but does not include replacement of food captured or destroyed by friendly forces.

<sup>c</sup> One-third of the weight of the external requirement represents a packaging factor; two-thirds of the weight is actual ammunition. No packaging factor is included in estimating internal ammunition requirements. The total ammunition requirement does include the external packaging factor.

41. Communist logistical requirements from external sources vary considerably in both amounts and class in the different areas of South Vietnam. In the northern provinces, for example, the requirement is probably higher per soldier than elsewhere in South Vietnam because the rate of combat there has been higher, and the troops are predominantly NVA and are better equipped. In the rice-deficit highlands, the external requirement for food is high. On the other hand, in the Delta and the Saigon area, Communist troops probably have no external requirement for food.

42. While we cannot estimate with confidence what proportions of external logistic resupply requirements are met by the respective routes into South Viet-

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nam, some generalizations can be made about the logistical systems involved. The road network through the Laotian Panhandle is used primarily to supply weapons, equipment, and ammunition. A portion of the food requirement for Communist forces in the northern provinces is infiltrated through or around the DMZ along with some other supplies. Cambodia is primarily a source for food (probably over 80 percent of the Communists' external requirement) and some items such as medical supplies and radios. Within South Vietnam, the Communist procurement and distribution system is usually organized under the Communist military regional headquarters.

43. *Food Supply.* The Communists continue to have problems with food supplies in certain areas, because of local shortages, distribution bottlenecks, and the effects of allied military operations which have increasingly intruded into Communist base areas and disrupted the supply network. The amount of Communist food supplies captured or destroyed by allied forces in 1967 is substantial. From 1 January through 30 August it amounted to an average of 55 to 75 tons per day, which is more than one-fourth the Communist Regular and Administrative Forces' daily requirement, and greater than their external requirement. But despite some severe local difficulties, the overall effectiveness of the Communist military forces has not yet been seriously impaired by these problems. The food requirements for the Communists in many areas are met from internal sources through taxation, purchase, and coercion. However, the Communist military forces in the DMZ area and in the rice-deficient areas in the highlands are largely dependent on imports from North Vietnam and Cambodia.

44. On balance, we believe that food supply problems for the Communists are likely to become more burdensome, and in some areas will impede military operations. Nevertheless, we do not believe that food shortages will greatly restrict overall Communist operations in the near future as long as the Communists have access to Cambodian rice.

45. *Impact of New and Heavier Weapons.* Communist forces in South Vietnam have increased their mortar, rocket, and artillery attacks. Over a year ago, 120 mm mortars and 70 mm and 75 mm howitzers began to be used. Other types of weapons have been employed since early 1967. These include Chinese Communists 102 mm rockets, Soviet 122 mm and 140 mm rockets, and RPG-7 antitank grenade launchers. In addition, the NVA has fired light and medium artillery into South Vietnam from positions within or north of the DMZ. The use of these heavier weapons in the DMZ area has increased substantially in 1967, and during periods of peak fire in September it is estimated that Communist forces in that area were expending mortar, rocket, and artillery ammunition at a rate of close to 4 tons per day.

46. The estimated ammunition expenditure for all mortar, artillery, and rocket weapons of the Communist forces in South Vietnam for the first 8 months of

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1967, not including that fired against allied forces just south of the DMZ averaged less than 1 ton per day. While logistic problems would inhibit increased use of these heavier weapons throughout South Vietnam on the scale they have been used near the DMZ, it is likely the Communists will increase their capabilities for mortar, rocket, and artillery attack against selected fixed targets.

47. Hanoi has recently concluded a new agreement with the USSR for military aid. It is possible that Hanoi has sought more sophisticated types of equipment than those now arriving on the scene. These might include cruise missiles and tactical rockets which could be used to support North Vietnamese operations in the DMZ area and against US warships.<sup>8</sup> A continuing and intensive watch has been maintained for any indications of the presence of these or larger missiles in North Vietnam. So far, no deliveries have been detected.

48. The North Vietnamese already have some SA-2s in the vicinity of the DMZ and we think it likely they might increase the numbers of SA-2s there. It is also possible, but less likely, that they would deploy SA-2s in Laos. They would almost certainly not introduce them into South Vietnam. It is possible that Hanoi would use aircraft against South Vietnam but we think this unlikely. In general, we believe that during the coming months the Soviets will continue to supply equipment designed to strengthen air and coastal defenses in North Vietnam and to increase the firepower of both the regular North Vietnamese forces and the Communist forces fighting in the South.

#### D. Communist Manpower in the South

49. *Communist Losses.* Total Communist losses have been rising sharply over the past 2 years. On the basis of the latest data, we estimate that total losses for 1967 will amount to about 170,000—an increase of about two-thirds compared with 1966. The bulk of these losses are killed-in-action as reported from body count. Our estimate of permanent losses from wounds is based on evidence indicating that for every 100 killed there would probably be 150 wounded, and that, of these, at least 35 die or are permanently disabled. Obviously, these figures involve a margin for error, but since they cannot take into account all casualties from air attacks or from artillery fire, or losses from sickness and accident, the killed and wounded estimates are probably not overstated. Figures for military returnees and prisoners are firm. But the number of deserters is an estimate based on a study that suggests there is likely to be one permanent desertion for every military returnee. If the overall totals do err, it is likely to be on the low side.

<sup>8</sup> For more detailed information on the types of weapons which the Soviets might supply the North Vietnamese, and the likelihood of their doing so, see SNIE 11-11-67, "Soviet Attitudes and Intentions Toward the Vietnam War," dated 4 May 1967, SECRET. We believe the conclusions are still valid.

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TABLE 5  
ESTIMATED COMMUNIST LOSSES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

	1966	1967 (Estimated Total) <sup>a</sup>
Killed-in-Action .....	55,500	90,000
Permanently Lost from Wounds .....	19,000	31,000
Military Returnees .....	13,000	21,000
Prisoners .....	2,500	7,000
Deserters .....	13,000	21,000
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>103,000<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>170,000<sup>b</sup></b>

<sup>a</sup> The 1967 estimated totals are the projections of averages of Communist losses during the first 9 months of 1967.

<sup>b</sup> These totals include not only losses for Regular and Administrative Service Forces and guerrillas, but also losses for an unknown number of other Communist elements such as self-defense, secret self-defense forces, and "Assault Youth," etc.

50. A major problem in assessing the significance of these Communist losses is that we are unable to determine what proportion are suffered by the fighting forces and what proportion by such elements as the self-defense forces, "Assault Youth," conscripted laborers and other civilians caught up in combat areas. What is clear is that not all of the killed and wounded are members of primary fighting units (NVA Regular forces, VC Main and Local forces, and guerrillas). Consequently, we cannot estimate the loss to these Communist military forces for any given year.

51. *VC Manpower Inputs.* In the face of these increasingly heavy losses, the manpower resources available to the VC and the actual rate of recruitment are critical elements in an estimate of Communist capabilities to continue military operations. A calculation of manpower available to the VC for recruitment is difficult because of the absence of trustworthy population statistics. But even if such statistics were fairly accurate, major assumptions have to be made concerning what percentage of able-bodied males are available to the VC recruitment apparatus in their own areas, in the contested areas, and in GVN-controlled areas.

52. Bearing in mind these caveats, we estimate that the VC may have access to approximately 1.4 million males between the ages of 15 and 45. From this total, we believe that the VC could recruit from a manpower pool of some 700,000-800,000 men, though less than half of this total are in VC-controlled areas.

53. It is difficult to reconcile this apparently large block of manpower derived from limited demographic data, with the increasing evidence over the past year of VC problems in obtaining recruits. One reason for this discrepancy is that the manpower in VC areas is already subject to other important requirements which are related to the war effort, such as food production, and some of these tasks are increasing. A second reason for VC difficulties is that losses of all types have probably reduced the real, as opposed to the theoretical manpower

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available to the VC. The third, and perhaps most important reason is the declining ability of the VC to obtain recruits because of allied forays into contested areas, the mounting flow of refugees out of these areas, and the likelihood that individuals are more reluctant to enlist in the VC movement than in 1964-1965 when the Communists appeared to be riding a crest of success.

54. These increasing recruitment problems are least evident in the Regular forces and most conspicuous among the guerrillas and self-defense forces, and have resulted in unfilled recruitment quotas, reduced standards (as to age, physical condition, and political reliability), and greater employment of women and youth. They have been particularly severe in areas of intense allied military pressure, but have not been totally absent elsewhere. Moreover, the Revolutionary Development (RD) program poses a threat to Communist access to the population, and is undoubtedly one of the reasons the VC have decided to exert heavy pressure against it.

55. We estimated that during 1966 the VC were probably able to recruit about 7,000 men per month. A reevaluation of recruitment for early 1967, however, shows that this performance has fallen off. We estimate that the average monthly recruitment probably falls within the range of 3,000 to 5,000 men per month for the Main forces, the Local forces, and the guerrillas. In addition, however, the VC commonly upgrade personnel from the lower to the higher echelons of the Communist organization. For example, a Local force unit will receive replacements from village guerrillas in the area; and these guerrillas in turn may be replaced by hamlet guerrillas, self-defense forces, or "Assault Youth." Some recent evidence suggests that in IV Corps, hamlet guerrillas and hamlet self-defense forces are being consolidated.

56. In any case, a persuasive indication of growing manpower problems for the VC is the increasing number of individual NVA soldiers serving as replacements in VC Main forces units. A study in late 1966 of a number of VC units in III Corps area indicated that at least 23 percent of the men in VC Main force units were NVA replacements, and the percentage is probably higher now. VC units in I and II Corps probably contain a higher percentage of NVA personnel, but we have not found NVA personnel in VC units in the Delta.

57. *Quality and Morale.* The rapid manpower turnover caused by increasing casualties has lowered the quality of all the VC fighting forces, but it is not yet apparent that this has seriously impaired their military effectiveness. The Communists have been forced to rely more and more on coercion to obtain recruits, have made greater use of women to free men for combat, and have reduced their recruitment and training standards. The decline in quality has been greatest at the lower levels, where personnel have repeatedly been siphoned off for higher echelons. More important, though probably not so pronounced, is the decline in the quality of the cadres—the cement of the VC organization.

58. In an endeavor to rectify this situation the Communists are resorting to several expedients to overcome weaknesses in their political operations. These

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include intensive reindoctrination sessions and the infusion of North Vietnamese cadre into the VC organization. Since mid-1966, the VC have also been shifting some experienced cadre down to the lower levels to improve the quality of leadership and to eliminate the overdependence of village and hamlet party chapters on higher echelons. Some administrative reorganizations have also been instituted in an attempt to strengthen local responsibility and initiative. The effects of such measures are not yet evident, but could somewhat improve VC efficiency at lower levels.

59. Captured documents and evidence from prisoners amply demonstrate that morale problems are becoming serious and are likely to become worse as the war continues. But there have been no mass defections. This year's returnee rate, a statistical indicator of morale, is well above last year's rate. Captured documents have repeatedly noted this trend as one of the Communists' major shortcomings. Since the bulk of the returnees come from the lower levels of the VC structure, the immediate effect of these losses has not been critical. The troops continue to fight well, and the VC infrastructure remains generally strong. Over the longer term, however, such losses not only deprive the Communists of manpower, but, more important, they erode the base of the VC infrastructure.

### III. THE OUTLOOK FOR COMMUNIST FORCES

60. In early 1965, prior to the commitment of sizable US forces, the Communists apparently expected to administer a knockout blow. After a period of some uncertainty and hesitation created by the US intervention in 1965, and certain tactical setbacks to the Communist forces, a general political-military strategy was worked out at the 12th Plenum of the North Vietnamese Communist Party in December 1965. This spelled out how to fight the war and manage its international aspects under the altered circumstances.

61. The essence of these decisions was to maintain sufficient forces in being to support a prolonged and aggressive war of attrition. Their objective in pursuing this strategy was and is to persuade the US that it cannot win; that it must eventually pull out or settle on terms favorable to Hanoi's further pursuit of its political goals. As part of this strategy, the war would be conducted without specific timetables; negotiations would be avoided unless from a position of significant military successes; and an effort would be made to limit the risks of an expanded war in the North or throughout Southeast Asia. This strategy aimed at maintaining a continuous threat by Regular forces, avoiding combat under unfavorable conditions, sustaining a high level of guerrilla activity, and undertaking limited objective offensives when favorable opportunities arise.

62. During 1966 and thus far in 1967, the Communists have apparently adhered to these basic decisions. For example, a new debate arose in late 1966 over the role of the guerrillas with some officials advocating a greater role for these forces at the expense of the Main forces. This proposition has apparently been rejected as tantamount to accepting a "strategic" reversal. Nevertheless, it is clear that debates over military-political tactics are continuing.

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63. Perhaps the most important problem for Hanoi during the last year has been how to maintain military pressure in the face of the superior firepower and mobility of the Allied forces. Its answer to this problem has been to emphasize artillery, rocket, and mortar attacks, especially on I Corps, and to develop substantial threats by large units in border areas in such a way as to spread thin the Allied forces, open opportunities for localized "victories," and create better conditions for attacks against the RD program. Over the past year the Communists have used elements of at least three and possibly four divisions in the DMZ area plus artillery and some air defense units. Another buildup of Communist forces has taken place in the highlands along the Cambodian border. Such threats tie down large US forces in these areas, thereby lessening Allied military pressures elsewhere.

64. *Future Force Levels.* Regardless of their previous policy decisions, the Communists will assess the actual situation as it evolves. Their decisions as to force structure and strengths over the next year will be affected in part by the level of combat, their casualty rates, the extent of any further buildup of Allied forces in the South, and the overall impact of the war effort against the North. Another factor which complicates estimates of future force structure and strength levels is that North Vietnam retains the capability to move division size forces across the DMZ. Should they exercise this option, then the total force structure in South Vietnam could be expanded relatively quickly by introducing one or two divisions into Quang Tri Province. Regardless of whether they introduce these divisions in the DMZ area, we feel the NVA will still try to expand its Regular forces in South Vietnam, by the deployment of some new combat infantry regiments. However, this may not result in any net increase in the numerical strength of Regular forces since continuing losses may further reduce the average unit strength.

65. Taking into consideration the estimated rates of infiltration, and allowing for the downward trend in population control by the VC, the rising Communist casualties, and VC recruiting problems, we conclude that the strength of the Communist military forces and political organizations in South Vietnam declined in the last year. The major portion of this decline has probably been felt at the lowest levels, reflecting a deliberate policy of sacrificing this level to maintain the structure of political cadres and the strength of the Regular military forces. Whether this trend will continue is difficult to estimate. There are still important unknowns and variables involved in measuring total losses against inputs from recruiting and infiltration. Moreover, there are alternative strategies, such as avoiding combat for prolonged periods, which the Communists might adopt to reduce casualties and conserve their forces. Another option, though less likely, would be for the Communists deliberately to reduce the strength of the Regular forces, in order to preserve guerrilla forces and strengthen the political apparatus. The locale and effectiveness of all allied operations will also have an important bearing on future Communist force levels; losses in the northern provinces and western highlands could be made up more readily through infiltration than losses in the Delta, where the burden is on VC recruitment.

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66. In any case, we believe that a major effort will be required to maintain the Regular forces and guerrillas at or near present levels. To do so will call for both a level of infiltration much higher than that observed in 1967 and intensive VC recruitment as well. Considering all the relevant factors, however, we believe that there is a fairly good chance that the overall strength and effectiveness of the military forces and the political infrastructure will continue to decline.

67. *Logistical Support.* The Communists will continue to have difficulties with internal distribution of supplies in South Vietnam that will cause local shortages and interfere with Communist operations from time to time. Their dependence on supplies from external sources is growing and could increase further over the next year, even if their strength declines somewhat. Nevertheless, we believe that the Communists will be able to continue to meet at least their essential supply requirements for the level of forces and activities in South Vietnam described in this estimate.

68. *Future Strategy.* The Communists apparently recognize that the chances of a complete military victory have disappeared, and they aim instead at a protracted war. Their objectives in this phase of the war are to immobilize and wear down the Allied military forces, to maintain base areas, expand their political agitation and control in contested and GVN areas, and defeat the RD program. In pursuit of these objectives, their tactics are to combine and coordinate closely their military operations and political activity.

69. Our judgment is that the Communists still retain adequate capabilities to support this strategy for at least another year. Whether or not Hanoi does in fact persist with this strategy depends not only on its capabilities to do so, but on a number of political and international considerations not treated in this estimate, such as the state of Sino-Soviet relations, conditions inside China, and Hanoi's view of US will and determination. Even if some combination of circumstances should make it impossible or undesirable for Hanoi to continue employing large conventional forces, the Communists would still have the capability to continue some forms of struggle—though at greatly reduced levels.

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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# Intelligence Memorandum

*Communist Units Participating in Attacks  
During the Tet Offensive*

*30 January Through 13 February 1968*

**Secret**

Copy No. 45

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January 1968

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
21 February 1968

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Communist Units Participating in Attacks  
During the Tet Offensive  
30 January Through 13 February 1968

Summary

A review [ ] since the start of the current Communist offensive indicates that approximately 58,000 Communist main and local forces were committed in attacks on urban areas and military installations through 13 February. (For detailed data on forces available and engaged in the Tet offensive, see Appendixes A and B.) Of this total, about 37 percent were North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops and another 29 percent were Viet Cong (VC) main force troops. The remaining 34 percent consisted of VC local forces which had been reinforced for the attacks by the upgrading of local guerrillas. On the basis of MACV's latest order of battle of 115,000 men, the Communists would appear to have committed about 50 percent of their regular forces to the attacks.

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If the reported losses of 32,500 killed in action and 5,500 detained applied solely to the VC/NVA regular forces, the Communists would have lost more than 65 percent of the forces committed to the Tet offensive. This would have been a devastating blow. However, there are a number of pieces of evidence which suggest that such an interpretation would overstate the Communist manpower drain.

First of all, VC/NVA forces participating in the offensive were augmented by numbers of

*Note: This memorandum was produced by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Economic Research with the assistance of the Vietnamese Affairs Staff and coordinated with the Office of Current Intelligence. It analyzes developments reported*

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guerrillas operating in independent units or integrated into local force units. Second, there was extensive VC activity to raise new recruits. Third, casualties included laborers conscripted to move VC supplies, as well as a number of civilians in densely populated areas taken under attack. Almost certainly the rate of casualties among new and relatively untrained forces was higher than among hard-core troops.

In summary, a number of factors suggest that the VC/NVA losses, although high, are not as serious as first believed. Most recently, the enemy has been taking advantage of his greater control of the countryside to accelerate recruiting among the rural population. All of these developments make it difficult to assess the current enemy manpower situation with any accuracy.

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### Introduction

1. The intensity of the Communist Tet offensive is reflected in the fact that 39 of South Vietnam's 44 provincial capitals, plus the autonomous cities of Saigon and Da Nang, were attacked. All of them were subjected to artillery and mortar fire or ground assault, and most of them were hit within the first three days. At least 35 of these capitals and the two autonomous cities were physically penetrated by Communist armed forces. In addition, at least 71 district capitals also were attacked. (For a list of the provincial and district capitals attacked, see Appendix B.) The offensive was aimed at civilian centers of authority, as well as at military installations such as base camps, airfields, and logistical facilities.

2. The Tet offensive is a part of the winter-spring campaign which the Communists have described as being the "decisive" phase of the war. As a maximum objective, the Communists hoped the campaign would culminate in a general uprising which would involve severe defeats for Allied military forces and would lead to US withdrawal from South Vietnam. At the same time, they also hoped that large-scale political agitation combined with attacks on urban areas would result in the collapse of the South Vietnamese government and create conditions favorable for a settlement and the establishment of a coalition government on Communist terms.

3. The Tet offensive also has several more immediate tactical objectives: (1) to disperse and tie down Allied military units in defensive positions, (2) to disrupt South Vietnamese centers of political authority, and (3) to demonstrate the inability of the South Vietnamese government to protect the population. In addition, the Communists may be attempting to gain greater control over a larger segment of the rural population by disrupting or destroying the pacification program while Allied forces are diverted to the protection of urban areas.

4. Although the Communists have not accomplished as much as they had hoped in this offensive, they have dealt a severe psychological blow to an urban population, accustomed to relative security from the active phase of the war. The Vietnamese

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populace appears to be dismayed at the apparent ease with which the Communists were able to enter the cities in strength and attack key installations. Large portions of some cities, including Hue, My Tho, and Ban Me Thuot, have been destroyed, and the increasing number of refugees and homeless created by the attacks have imposed substantial new economic and social burdens on an already heavily burdened government.\* The Communists also inflicted considerable damage on Allied military installations, in addition to tying down a number of Allied military forces to restoring security in urban areas.

5. Despite these achievements, the Communists failed to organize any significant support from the general populace. Moreover, the offensive has been waged at a considerable cost in terms of losses of men and weapons.\*\* The importance of the loss of men lies less in the numbers killed, which are believed to be overstated, than it does in the caliber of the troops lost. Although guerrillas, recently infiltrated personnel, and untrained new recruits probably account for many of the casualties, the identification of units taking part in the assaults indicates that a considerable number of skilled, well-trained VC/NVA infantry, sappers, and special-action troops also were lost.

#### Forces Committed to the Tet Offensive

6. A review of field reporting since the start of the Communist offensive, although still incomplete, provides sufficient information to identify most of the enemy units directly participating in the attacks against urban areas and military installations.\*\*\* These units are listed in Appendix B, which shows that as of 13 February (Saigon time), approximately 58,000 Communist main and local forces had been actively committed in

\* See ER IM 68-20, The Effects of the Tet Offensive on the Economy of South Vietnam as of 15 February 1968, 16 February 1968, SECRET [redacted]

\*\* For additional information on enemy losses, see paragraph 9 and Appendix B.

\*\*\* This memorandum does not include attacks on military installations in the Khe Sanh area.

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the Tet attacks. The number of Communist forces committed to reserves and defensive positions for the Tet offensive is not considered in this memorandum.

7. About 22,000, or 37 percent of the 58,000 actively committed, have been identified as North Vietnamese troops. All of these troops were located in the I and II Corps areas, where they accounted for 60 to 65 percent of the attacking forces. Nearly 17,000, or about 45 percent of the 36,000 VC forces offensively engaged, were main force troops, the remainder being local force troops. In addition, it is believed that a considerable portion of the guerrilla forces, which were built up in preparation for the current offensive, directly participated in the attacks.\* Some of the guerrillas were upgraded to bring VC main and local force units up to full order-of-battle strength and, therefore, are believed counted in the total estimate of VC/NVA forces. However, the figure of 58,000 is understated to the extent that certain main and local force units and independent guerrilla units which participated in the attacks have not been identified. Evidence also indicates that the attacking units contained a number of new, inexperienced recruits and that civilians were impressed to provide support to these units.

8. On the basis of MACV's order of battle of 31 December 1967, which lists 115,000 VC/NVA maneuver and combat-support troops for the entire country, the Communists appear to have committed about 50 percent of their main and local forces to the attacks. At least 7 percent of the troops tentatively identified in the attacks, however, are not listed in MACV's order of battle. (For the methodology used in estimating these troops, see Appendix C.) These units are not as yet carried in the order of battle because they are newly formed, recently infiltrated, or previously unidentified.\*\* Examples of these three include the

\* A separate OER report on the role of the guerrillas in the Tet offensive is being prepared.

\*\* MACV's acceptance and rejection criteria for Communist units, particularly for newly infiltrated units, tend to minimize the number of units and soldiers listed for any [footnote continued on p. 6]

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510th and 511th VC local force battalions, the 31st regiment of the 341st NVA division, and the Nha Trang Municipal Unit.

9. More than 32,500 of the attacking forces reportedly had been killed and another 5,500 detained as of 13 February. The many uncertainties attached to these data make them extremely difficult to evaluate, particularly in terms of their impact on enemy strength. The compilation of field reporting on enemy forces committed in the III Corps area, for example (see Table 4), falls far short of the numbers reported killed and detained (see Table 5). Even allowing for incompleteness in the identification of units, the implied loss rate of the data presently available for the III Corps area imply a loss rate far in excess of that which is reasonably possible. It seems clear, therefore, that the number of enemy losses should not be compared with the number of main and local forces listed in the order of battle or the numbers engaged in the attacks. There is sufficient evidence to support a judgment that the enemy casualties include (1) guerrillas operating in independent guerrilla units; (2) guerrillas recently upgraded to main and local force units; (3) new recruits; (4) laborers conscripted to move supplies for the attacks; and (5) civilians in densely populated areas taken under attack.

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*point in time. MACV's order of battle of 31 December 1967 indicates a decline in the size of the main and local forces from the order of battle of 31 October. Evidence suggests, however, that the Communists actually were in the process of increasing the size of their regular units during this period in preparation for the Tet offensive.*

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APPENDIX A

Forces Available and Engaged in the TET Offensive  
(30 January-13 February 1968)

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APPENDIX B

List of Provincial and District Capitals Attacked

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Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified, and  
Their Strengths, by Province a/

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
<u>Quang Tri</u>		
Quang Tri City <u>b/</u>	812th NVA Regt.	2,600
Cam Lo <u>c/</u>	1st Bn, 803rd NVA Regt.	500
Hai Lang <u>c/</u>	1st Bn, 270th Regt.	350
Mai Linh <u>c/</u>	5th NVA Regt.	1,340
Trieu Phong <u>c/</u>	27th Ind. NVA Bn.	300
	3 U/I Bns.	1,200
	Total	<u>6,290</u>
<u>Thua Thien</u>		
Hue City <u>b/</u>	Hue Municipal Unit	
Phu Loc <u>c/</u>	(Hue Sapper Bn.)	225
	800th VC Bn, 6th NVA Regt.	300
	4th NVA Regt. Ind.	2,000
	Total	<u>2,525</u>
<u>Quang Nam</u>		
Da Nang (Auton City)		
Hoi An City <u>b/</u>	R-20 VC LF Bn.	400
Dien Ban <u>c/</u>	V-25 VC LF Bn.	400
Hieu Nhon <u>c/</u>	3rd Bn, 31st Regt. 341 NVA Div.	500
Duy Xuyen <u>c/</u>	3 U/I Co's - est.	300
Hoa Vang <u>c/</u>	Poss els GK 31 AA Bn NVA Ad Bn.	400
	Total	<u>2,000</u>

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I Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/  
(Continued)

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
	<u>Quang Tin</u>	
Tam Ky City <u>b/</u>	72nd VC LF Bn.	300
	21st NVA Regt.	1,500
	70th VC MF Bn.	400
	V-12 VC LF Co.	500
	V-13 VC LF Co.	
	V-16 VC LF Co.	
	74th VC LF Co.	
	78th VC LF Co.	
	F. 105 VC LF Co.	
	Total	<u>2,700</u>
	<u>Quang Ngai</u>	
Quang Ngai City <u>b/</u>	48th VC LF Bn	400
Binh Son <u>c/</u>		
Son Tinh <u>c/</u>		
Nghia Hanh <u>c/</u>	401st Sap Reg. & Sub Bns	1,700
Mo Duc <u>c/</u>	406 Sap Bn.	(450)
	120th Mont. Bn.	(400)
	107th AA Bn.	(400)
	405th Sap Bn.	(450)
	81st VC LF Bn.	360
	Total	<u>2,460</u>

a. Identifies all province and district towns reported attacked during the Tet offensive. Communist units identified in the attacks do not necessarily correspond to the cities and towns as listed.

b. Province capital.

c. District capital.

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## SECRET

II Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
	<u>Kontum</u>	
Kontum City <u>b/</u>	4th Bn, 24th NVA Regt.	435
Dak To <u>c/</u>	6th Bn, 24th NVA Regt.	335
	66th NVA Regt.	1,560
	40th Arty Regt.	1,000
	2nd Bn, 174th NVA Regt.	220
	Total	<u>3,550</u>
	<u>Pleiku</u>	
Pleiku City <u>b/</u>	407th VC Sap Bn	500
Le Trung <u>c/</u>	H15 VC LF Bn	400
Thanh An <u>c/</u>	408th VC Sap Bn	360
	4th Bn, 95B NVA Regt.	475
	5th Bn, 95B NVA Regt.	375
	Hq & Spt Bn NVA Regt.	500
	32nd NVA Regt.	1,600
	200th VC Arty Bn	400
	Total	<u>4,610</u>
	<u>Tuyen Duc</u>	
Dalat City <u>b/</u>	C-809 VC LF Co. } C-810 VC LF Co. } C-610 VC LF Co. }	210
	2 Co's, 145th NVA Regt.	150
	Total	<u>360</u>

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II Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province c/  
(Continued)

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
<u>Binh Dinh</u>		
Qui Nhon City <u>b/</u>	36th Sap Bn	245
Phu Cat <u>c/</u>	E 2 B VC LF Bn	200
An Nhon <u>c/</u>	36B Sap Bn	250
Phy My <u>c/</u>	18th NVA Regt.	1,250
Tuy Phuoc <u>c/</u>		
Hoai Nhon <u>c/</u>		
	Total	<u>1,945</u>
<u>Darlac</u>		
Ban Me Thuot City <u>b/</u>	33rd NVA Regt.	860
Buon Ho <u>c/</u>	E301 VC LF Bn	470
Thuan Hieu <u>c/</u>	95th NVA Regt.	1,275
Lac Thien <u>c/</u>	H-5 VC LF Bn	45
	381st VC Sap Bn	200
	86th VC LF Bn	300
	88th VC LF Bn	300
	181st Mont. Bn, 95th NVA Regt, VC	300
	481st VC Sap Bn	200
	Total	<u>3,950</u>
<u>Phu Yen</u>		
Tuy Hoa City <u>b/</u>	5th Bn, 95th NVA Regt.	280
Hieu Xuong <u>c/</u>	4th Bn, 95th NVA Regt.	260
	30th VC Bn	200
	U/I E1-MS, 91st NVA Regt.	200
	85th VC Bn & 1 NVA Plt.	300
	Total	<u>1,240</u>

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II Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/  
(Continued)

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
<u>Khanh Hoa</u>		
Nha Trang City <u>b/</u>	7th Bn, 18B NVA Regt.	205
Ninh Hoa <u>c/</u>	8th Bn, 18B NVA Regt.	290
Cam Lam <u>c/</u>	9th Bn, 18B NVA Regt.	270
	Nha Trang Municipal Unit	20
	K90 VC Sap Co.	35
	95th NVA Arty Bn.	150
	K89 VC Sap Co.	120
	T86th VC Sap Co.	120
	K91 VC Sap Co.	35
	T88 VC Sap Co. (Recon)	120
	Total	<u>1,365</u>
<u>Binh Thuan</u>		
Phan Thiet City <u>b/</u>	482 VC LF Bn.	400
Thien Giao <u>c/</u>	840 VC MF Bn.	250
	430 VC LF Co.	50
	2 U/I LF Co's	120
	Total	<u>820</u>
<u>Ninh Thuan</u>		
Phan Rang <u>b/</u>	U/I LF Co.	100

a. Identifies all province and district towns reported attacked during the Tet offensive. Communist units identified in the attacks as listed do not necessarily correspond to the cities and towns as listed.

b. Province capital.

c. District capital.

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## SECRET

III Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
<u>Phuoc Long</u>		
Phuoc Binh City <u>b/</u> Song Be <u>c/</u>	VC LF Co's	400
<u>Long Khanh</u>		
Xuan Loc City <u>b/</u> Dinh Quan <u>c/</u>	(H.4 PLT) VC LF	50
<u>Bien Hoa</u>		
Bien Hoa City <u>b/</u>	274th VC MF Regt.	1,650
Duc Tu <u>c/</u>	275th VC MF Regt.	1,650
Tan Uyen <u>c/</u>	Phu Loi VC LF Bn	400
Long Thanh <u>c/</u>	Dong Nai VC MF Bn	400
	4th VC LF Bn	200
	Total	<u>4,300</u>
<u>Tay Ninh</u>		
Tay Ninh City <u>b/</u> Phu Khuong <u>c/</u> Hieu Thien <u>c/</u> Phuoc Ninh <u>c/</u>	VC LF Dist. Co's	400
<u>Hau Nghia</u>		
Bao Trai City <u>b/</u> Cu Chi <u>c/</u> Duc Hoa <u>c/</u> Duc Hue <u>c/</u>	VC LF Co's	400
<u>Binh Long</u>		
An Loc City <u>b/</u> Loc Ninh <u>c/</u> Chon Thanh <u>c/</u>	VC LF Co's	100

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III Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/  
(Continued)

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
	<u>Binh Duong</u>	
Phu Cuong City <u>b/</u>	273rd VC MF Regt.	1,750
Ben Cat <u>c/</u>	681 Bac Ben Cat LF Co	50
Phu Hoa <u>c/</u>		
Phu Giao <u>c/</u>		
Tri Tam <u>c/</u>		
	Total	<u>1,800</u>
	<u>Long An</u>	
Tan An City <u>b/</u>		80
Ben Luc <u>c/</u>	317 Binh Luc Dist. LF Co	100
	Total	<u>180</u>
	<u>Phuoc Tuy</u>	
Phuoc Le City <u>b/</u>	C 41 Chan Duc LF Co.	85
	<u>Gia Dinh/Saigon (Autonomous City)</u>	
Gia Dinh City <u>b/</u>	269th VC MF Bn	300
Hoc Mon <u>c/</u>	2nd VC LF Bn	270
Thu Duc <u>c/</u>	6th VC LF Bn	450
	D-14 LF VC Bn	300
	D-12 LF VC Bn	300
	C-10-VC SAPPER Bn	350
	D-16 LF VC Bn	420
	1 Co. 306 MF Bn	150
	Total	<u>2,540</u>

a. Identifies all province and district towns reported attacked during the Tet offensive. Communist units identified in the attacks as listed do not necessarily correspond to the cities and towns as listed.

b. Province capital.

c. District capital.

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IV Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
	<u>Dinh Tuong</u>	
My Tho City <u>b/</u>	512th VC LF Bn.	550
Cai Be <u>c/</u>	514th VC LF Bn.	100
Cai Lay <u>c/</u>	DT1 VC MF Regt.	1,500
	207th VC MF Bn.	400
	Total	<u>2,550</u>
	<u>Go Cong</u>	
Go Cong City <u>b/</u>	514th VC LF Bn.	300
	361st VC LF Bn.	300
	Total	<u>600</u>
	<u>Kien Hoa</u>	
Ben Tre City <u>b/</u>	516th VC MF Bn.	500
Mo Cay <u>c/</u>		
Binh Dai <u>c/</u>		
	<u>Vinh Binh</u>	
Tra Vinh City <u>b/</u>	503rd VC LF Co.	130
Cang Long <u>c/</u>	505th VC LF Co.	120
Tieu Can <u>c/</u>	525th VC LF Co.	80
	509th VC LF Bn.	250
	501st VC LF Bn.	350
	531st VC LF Bn.	300
	527th VC LF Bn.	300
	306th VC MF Bn. (Elms)	
	Total	<u>1,530</u>

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IV Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/  
(Continued)

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
<u>Vinh Long</u>		
Vinh Long City <u>b/</u>	306th VC MF Bn.	500
Vung Liem <u>c/</u>	857th VC LF Bn.	200
Cho Lach <u>c/</u>	308th VC MF Bn.	500
Tam Binh <u>c/</u>		
Binh Minh <u>c/</u>		
	Total	<u>1,200</u>
<u>Chuong Thien</u>		
Vi Thanh City <u>b/</u>	3 VC LF Co's & 2 Plts.	330
<u>Ba Xuyen</u>		
Soc Trang City <u>b/</u>	2 VC LF Co's	200
My Xuyen <u>c/</u>	606 My Xuyen LF Co.	100
Thanh Tri <u>c/</u>	Tran Tri LF Co.	80
	Total	<u>380</u>
<u>Bac Lieu</u>		
Vinh Loi City <u>b/</u>	5 VC LF Co's	420
<u>An Xuyen</u>		
Quan Long City <u>b/</u>	U Minh 11 VC LF Bn	
Cai Nuoc <u>c/</u>	New 306th, VC LF Bn.	1,200
<u>Phong Dinh</u>		
Can Tho City <u>b/</u>	303rd Bn, D2 VC MF Regt.	500
Phung Hiep <u>c/</u>	Tay Do VC LF Bn.	400
Phong Dien <u>c/</u>	New Tay Do VC LF Bn. (AKA 307 Bn.)	400
Thuan Nhon <u>c/</u>	309th VC MF Bn.	500
	Total	<u>1,850</u>

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IV Corps

Cities Attacked, Communist Units Identified,  
and Their Strengths, by Province a/  
(Continued)

<u>City</u>	<u>Communist Units Identified in Attacks in Province</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
<u>Kien Giang</u>		
Rach Gia City <u>b/</u> Ha Tien <u>c/</u> Kien An <u>c/</u>	2 Co's U Minh 10 LF Bn.	400
<u>Chau Duc</u>		
Chau Phu City <u>b/</u> An Phu <u>c/</u> Tri Ton <u>c/</u>	512th VC LF Bn. 510th VC LF Bn. 511th VC LF Bn.	550 500 500
	Total	<u>1,550</u>
<u>Kien Phong</u>		
Cao Lanh City <u>b/</u> Hong Ngu <u>c/</u>	U/I Elms, 502nd LF VC Bn.	300
<u>Kien Tuong</u>		
Moc Hao City <u>b/</u>	267th VC MF Bn.	400
<u>Sa Dec</u>		
Sa Dec City <u>b/</u> Duc Ton <u>c/</u> Duc Thanh <u>c/</u>	3 VC LF Co's	140

a. Identifies all province and district towns reported attacked during the Tet offensive. Communist units identified in the attacks as listed do not necessarily correspond to the cities and towns as listed.

b. Province capital.

c. District capital.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

16 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans, State (INR)  
[redacted] DIA  
[redacted] Boards and Estimates  
Division, NSA

SUBJECT : NIE 14.3-67: CAPABILITIES OF THE VIETNAMESE  
COMMUNISTS FOR FIGHTING IN  
SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The attached draft estimate is forwarded for cleanup.
2. A representatives' meeting to discuss this draft has been scheduled for Thursday, 19 October, at 1400, CIA Headquarters.
3. Please telephone [redacted] by 1000, Thursday, 19 October, to give her the names of your representatives and their clearances. Arrangements will be made for them to enter the building at the Main Entrance.

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[redacted]  
Executive Officer  
National Estimates

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

6 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans, State (INR)  
[redacted] DIA  
[redacted] Boards and Estimates  
[redacted] Division, NSA

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SUBJECT : NIE 14.3-67: CAPABILITIES OF THE VIETNAMESE  
COMMUNISTS FOR FIGHTING IN  
SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Forwarded herewith are new paragraphs for subject estimate. These changes should be made in your text dated 28 August 1967.

2. We have no disposition to reopen substantive issues in the paragraphs which have been already agreed with the representatives. We wish to focus attention upon the new paragraphs.

3. A representatives' meeting to discuss the new paragraphs has been scheduled for Thursday, 12 October, at 1400 at CIA Headquarters.

4. Please telephone [redacted] by 1000, Thursday, 12 October, to give her the names of your representatives and their clearances. Arrangements will be made for them to enter the building at the Main Entrance.

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[redacted]  
Executive Officer  
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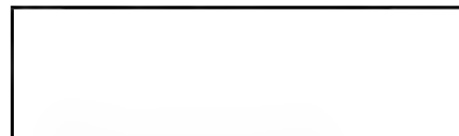
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

28 August 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: NIE 14.3-67: CAPABILITIES OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS  
FOR FIGHTING IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The attached draft estimate has been approved by the Board of National Estimates after consideration of it by the USIB representatives.
2. You will be notified later of the date of its consideration by USIB.



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Executive Officer  
National Estimates

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

27 July 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans, State (INR)  
[redacted] DIA  
[redacted] Policy Division, NSA

SUBJECT : SNIE 14.3-1-67: VIET CONG RECRUITMENT AND  
MORALE PROBLEMS

1. The attached draft estimate is forwarded for review.
2. A representatives' meeting to discuss this draft has been scheduled for 1400, Monday, 31 July, at CIA Headquarters.
3. Please telephone [redacted] by 1000, Monday, 31 July, to give her the names of your representatives and their clearances. Arrangements will be made for them to enter the building at the Main Entrance.

[redacted]  
Executive Officer  
National Estimates

DISTRIBUTION B

cc: Colonel Bruce Merritt, USA (ACSI)  
Captain R. W. F. Werthmuller, USN (ONI)  
Colonel Henson R. DeBruler, USAF (AFNIEBB)

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D/T

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1 March 1968

## MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Communists' Ability to Recoup Their Tet Military Losses

Introduction

1. We have examined and assessed in detail the evidence bearing on the ability of the Communists to replace their military losses sustained in the Tet offensive. We are able to offer only a very tenuous judgment concerning the time frame within which they might accomplish a full recovery in numbers of troops.

2. At a maximum, it appears that this will take them no longer than six months. This assumes that the rate of combat will be sustained at above normal levels, but that no new ground effort on a scale like that at Tet will be mounted. It is entirely possible, however, that they might be able to accomplish full recovery in a much shorter time and that within six months their troop strength would

Note: This memorandum was produced by CIA. It was jointly prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and the Office of Economic Research.

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be substantially greater than it was prior to Tet. Everything hinges on the real extent of their Tet losses and on their ability to recruit and impress personnel in the countryside. On both of these fundamental points evidence is very spotty at present.

### The Tet Losses

3. In making our assessment, we included the enemy killed-in-action (KIA) reported by the US military authorities in Vietnam from the period 30 January through 21 February--some 38,600 men. This period covered the mass urban attacks and the "second round" on 18-19 February, as well as its immediate aftermath. We excluded the fighting since 21 February on the grounds that, although enemy losses have continued heavy, they have been overall at a more "normal" level for the war.

4. We have based the assessment on our judgment that roughly 77,000 enemy were involved in the attacks. This included North Vietnamese (NVA) units and main and local forces of about 58,000. (This latter figure was reached independently in a CIA analysis and is also roughly accepted by most OE authorities who have studied the offensive, including the US MACV). The additional 20,000 men in our computation of the forces involved in the

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offensive were, we believe, members of independent guerrilla units or guerrillas added to local force units for the attacks.

Table I

Strength of Participating Communist Forces  
in the Tet Attacks

	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Total	77,000	100
NVA	21,600	27.8
VC Main Force	16,800	21.6
VC Local Force	19,300	24.9
Guerrillas	20,000	25.7

4 / 5. There is good evidence of extensive guerrilla participation in the offensive. Captured documents have now provided us with some detailed planning for the attacks in a few provinces. These suggest that the enemy hoped to use from one half to two thirds of his guerrilla force in an offensive role. It appears that about 20,000 guerrillas actually participated in the urban attacks. The remainder were used in offensive roles against smaller targets such as lines of communication, etc.

6. The dilemma with respect to the casualties arises when the reported enemy KIA (38,600) is considered against the total offensive force estimated

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to have been involved (77,000). Taken at face value, this means that approximately one half of the attacking force was killed in the offensive and its aftermath. This, in itself, is exceedingly difficult to accept--given the postaction reports we already have on the status of some enemy units and the current high level of enemy activity throughout the country. The reports suggest the Communists were badly hurt, but do not indicate that their dead reached 50 percent. A number of the attacking units, moreover, have already reappeared in offensive combat, something they would hardly have been able to do if their losses had been on the order of 50 percent.

7. The reported KIA became even more unacceptable when an attempt was made to account for those who were probably disabled. Even if the standard, conservative factor of .35 died of wounds or were permanently disabled is applied for every KIA, over 13,000 more men are added to the losses. The total casualties computed in this conservative manner, would be nearly two thirds of our strength estimate of those involved in the attacks. The total enemy casualties would be about 90 percent of the assault force, if this force is conceived of only as composed of regular forces (some 58,000).

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Possible Non-Military Casualties

8. Assuming that the KIA figure itself is accurate, it almost certainly must include a substantial proportion of other organizational elements of the enemy apparatus and nonparticipating civilians who happened to be caught in the urban battle areas.

[REDACTED] We now know, in addition, that the Communists made a major effort in the few months prior to Tet to fill up their irregular ranks (guerrilla and militia) and to recruit many laborers for logistic support, particularly the so-called "assault youth." Many of the POWs from the offensive were individuals virtually taken from street corners and pressed into the attacks by the enemy. Eyewitnesses, moreover, report that large numbers of civilian-type personnel were used as "shock troops" in many of the urban assaults.

9. Analysis of the available evidence does not provide a good enough base from which to assign even a tenuous percentage to the total number of individuals like those above who might have participated in the attacks and became casualties. Some of

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the evidence, for example, suggests the casualties involving militia-civilians-laborers, etc, may have run about 25 percent of the total; other evidence, however, indicates such casualties may have run as high as 50 percent of the total losses in some areas.

10. Therefore, in adopting a base for judging the Communist recuperative ability, we can only accept the reported KIA figure as it stands--questionable as it is--and view future enemy capabilities against it. In contrast with the point of view of the US military in Vietnam, that the enemy's losses and capability to recoup should be weighed against his offensive military strength, we would be inclined to judge these factors from the standpoint of his total organized manpower base. For this reason, we would include enemy militia and even political infrastructure as sources for troop replacement and as part of the remaining Communist threat.

11. In our view, the organized enemy force structure in South Vietnam prior to Tet and following an extensive recruiting drive sets up approximately as follows:

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Table II

Estimated Communist Organized Manpower Base  
as of 30 January 1968

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VC/NVA Main and Local Forces	160,000
Guerrillas	100,000-120,000
Administrative Services	75,000-100,000
Self-defense Militia	100,000
Political Cadre	80,000-120,000
	<hr/>
	515-600,000

12. The above table of organized strength includes the additional North Vietnamese forces that we know are in country, but which have not yet been added to MACV's OB, as well as a number of specialized units and small elements--city forces in some cases--which have been fairly well identified, but not yet included in the OB. The table also includes a higher strength figure than MACV now carries for the guerrillas, but is reflective, we believe, of the reality of the situation and the pre-Tet recruiting. The self-defense militia is also included in the table since it is an element of enemy defensive strength at least, and one which furnishes some of the manpower for higher level enemy units. The administrative services and political cadre, we believe, also reflect more realistic levels.

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13. Viewed numerically against this base, the enemy's losses, particularly in times of main and local force strength, could be relatively insignificant as a long-term problem. It would seem reasonable that, if the Communists have managed in the past to maintain an organized manpower base of the size postulated in Table II, they could easily recoup their Tet losses in a relatively short period of time, both by recruitment-conscription into the lower level military elements, and by upgrading to the regular forces from the lower level units.

The Replacement Campaign

14. There is abundant evidence that the Communists are now making a strenuous effort to recoup their losses and, in fact, to raise their over-all military force strength above the pre-Tet levels.

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heavy recruiting is under way in almost all populous areas where the enemy can penetrate, particularly in the Delta, which has long been a prime reservoir for enemy manpower.

15. There is little question that the Tet offensive has opened a new recruitment base to the Viet Cong in the South Vietnamese countryside. A

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declining recruitment pool because of refugee movement to GVN-held areas was partially responsible for VC recruitment shortfalls in 1967. The new pool, consisting of the populations of hamlets in the countryside where the VC formerly have had little or no influence, can be expected to boost 1968 recruitment greatly. New-found influence in rural areas--if only in the form of increased popular respect for VC power--will permit VC recruiters easy access to hamlets and a ready audience of youths.

16. [REDACTED]

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indicates that VC recruitment in a specific area is directly related to VC influence in that area. Stated differently, in areas of strong VC influence the Communists are able to mobilize significantly greater shares of the available population. The Tet offensive has enabled the VC/NVA forces to extend their influence and presence into both rural and urban areas which, until recent months, were firmly under GVN control.

17. South Vietnam's countryside offers a substantial recruitment pool for VC cadre. Of South Vietnam's total population of about 17 million, slightly more than 14 million live in rural areas--in hamlets outside of province capitals, district

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capitals, and autonomous cities. Approximately two million of these are males between the ages of 20 and 45, and an additional 680,000 are males from 15 to 19. Although the GVN has already recruited from the 20-45 age group, this recruitment has far from exhausted the available manpower. In addition, the GVN has yet to reach the 15 to 19 age group; these youths are prime targets for VC recruiters.

18. The intensity of the current recruiting drive, the availability of manpower, and the current freedom of the enemy in formerly contested and even some secure areas of the country, all add to the impression that the Communists will be able to replace their losses numerically in a relatively short period of time. Prior to the Tet offensive, enemy recruitment was estimated [REDACTED]

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in Vietnam at between 3-5,000 a month. It is now clear, however, that this rate had shot up in the months immediately preceding Tet. In view of the current enemy recruiting drive and access to the countryside, it does not seem improbable that they can at least double this rate to between 6,000 and 10,000 men a month, at least over the short term. At such a rate, it would take the Communists no more

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than six months, at a maximum, to replace their reported KIA losses during the Tet offensive.

19. This computation, of course, does not take into account the "normal" Communist losses since 21 February, or the future losses during the recuperation period. Over a six-month time frame, such losses could perhaps double the total replacement necessary. During certain periods within the past year, for example, Communist losses have run at a rate of around 4,000 men per month. On the other hand, the replacement rate described above for the Tet losses does not take into account the continuing infiltration of manpower from North Vietnam into the South. This has been running at a rate of about 4,000 to 6,000 men a month on the average during the past year and conceivably could offset the additional combat losses during the Tet recovery period. Infiltration would clearly tend, over a six-month period, at least, to offset NVA unit losses in South Vietnam.

#### The Qualitative Aspect

20. From the standpoint of troop quality, the Communist losses will be somewhat harder to replace, and a time frame for such recovery cannot be assigned. However, it is probable that the over-all qualitative loss to the enemy during the Tet offensive was not as substantial as the total KIA figures

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would indicate. As noted above, anywhere from 25 to 50 percent of the KIA conceivably were not part of the regular Communist military apparatus. Moreover, there are several other aspects to consider in assessing the qualitative loss. One is the replacement of well-trained cadre in the person of officers, non-coms, and technical specialists. Another aspect is the replacement of trained infantrymen. In the former case, our judgment is that the losses ran around 20 to 30 percent of the net KIA--perhaps 12,000 men. This would include an attrition representing the normal ratio of officers, non-coms, and specialists in Communist units and also some additional allowance for high losses among specially trained units such as sappers who were apparently used extensively in the early stages of the urban offensive.

21. This loss in many ways may be the most serious aspect of the Communist casualties during the offensive, since the training of replacements for these groups will take many months. We know from captured documents, for example, that the Communists have been training large numbers of sappers during the past year in courses ranging up to six months.

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22. The replacement of trained infantry would seem to be a less serious, although still significant, aspect of the loss. Normally, the training cycle for such men in a good southern Communist unit runs about three months. This problem is overcome by the enemy to some extent, however, by his process of upgrading to higher echelons men who have already received partial or rudimentary military training.

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[REDACTED] it would appear that the Communists plan to continue this course in replacing their Tet losses. The regular forces will be filled out by levies from among the irregulars, who will in turn receive the new conscripts and recruits.

23. Perhaps the most important aspect of the qualitative loss among the rank-and-file infantry will be in the youthful age of many of the incoming recruits and conscripts. It is clear that a growing proportion of the Communist forces over the past year have been in the age group from 16 to 18. The exact proportions of the current and prospective age mix of Communist rank-and-file soldiers, however, is far from clear and will probably remain so.

The ARVN's Losses

24. The South Vietnamese Army and paramilitary forces also suffered substantial casualties during

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the recent Tet offensive. From 30 January through 27 February, the army lost over 3,200 killed and 12,000 wounded. This loss rate is approximately three times the normal monthly rate of ARVN casualties during the past year. We have no accounting of troops who might have defected during the recent Tet offensive.

25. Little hard information is available to us on the ability of the ARVN to recoup its manpower losses. We do know that the ARVN had been able, despite its loss rate during 1967, to sustain its over-all combat strength through recruitment and the draft. It had, in fact, increased slightly in strength during the latter half of 1967, after the desertion rate began to drop. It seems likely, however, that, if the ARVN loss rate remains at anything like the level sustained during the past month, the army will be unable to maintain its numerical strength. It is probable that the loss rate will drop substantially from the levels of the past month, although not to the 1967 rate.

26. The current plans of the Saigon government for the augmentation of the ARVN will probably enable the ARVN to maintain its combat strength at roughly the current numerical levels, and perhaps to increase

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it, unless the fighting again flares to major levels. We know little in detail about these plans, although the government has announced that it intends to begin drafting 18- and 19-year-old youths in the first half of 1968. The recall of many ex-service-men and a freeze on discharges of those now in service will also, if fully implemented, help in recouping and adding to the ARVN strength. At this point, it is impossible to predict the time frame in which this will take place.

27. Reporting also is incomplete on the impact of the Tet offensive on the regional and popular forces, the paramilitary arm of the South Vietnamese military establishment. There are indications, however, that these forces, which operate primarily in the countryside, are currently being subjected to a substantial enemy drive aimed at demoralizing them. The effort appears to be achieving some success, especially in the Delta, where regular ARVN troops have pulled in to defend district and provincial towns. There are many reports of outposts formerly held by regional and popular forces that have now been abandoned.

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